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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXV No. 2156 — WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC — MAY 17 1941

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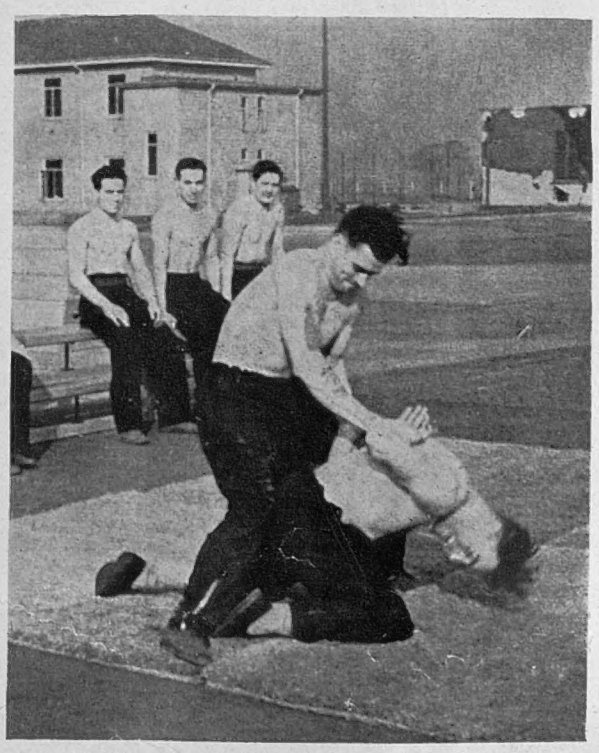
A MASS DESCENT BY BRITISH PARACHUTISTS : A picture taken during recent exercises by our newest arm of the Fighting Forces. This demonstration was witnessed by the Prime Minister, who may be seen in the little group on the left watching the men landing

MORE ABOUT OUR PARACHUTE TROOPS

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE TROOPS BEFORE EMPLANING : The man on the left (with the parachutists' badge on his sleeve) is an instructor. He is giving the parachute troops under training their instructions before they enter the aircraft for practice descents

GENERAL SIR JOHN DILL (Chief of the Imperial General Staff) inspects the special boots worn by the parachute troops

PARACHUTE TROOPS IN THE AIRCRAFT AWAITING THE MOMENT TO JUMP : In this case, the aircraft is a big British bomber which has been specially adapted for transportation purposes. The men are here grouped round the opening through which their parachute descents will be made later



"TOUGHENING UP" THE TROOPS : Part of the special training undertaken by the parachutists is a physical training course : during the course of this they are taught many tricks which might prove useful later on when dealing with a tricky and unscrupulous enemy

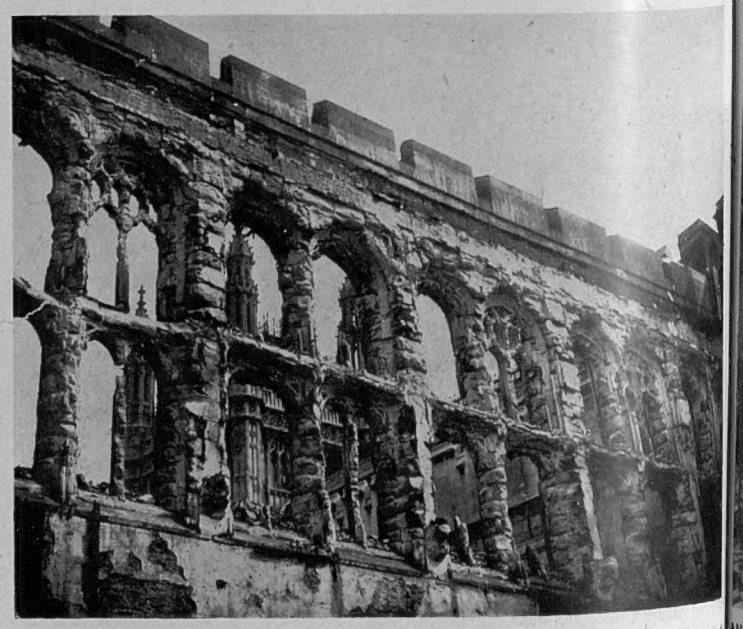
The GREAT RAID of MAY 10-11: The

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS WRECKED : A view of the Chamber looking towards the spot where once the Speaker's Chair stood : it is now a complete shambles. In the background of this view are the Ladies' Gallery and the Press Gallery. Practically nothing of this historic Chamber has survived the bomber's fury. Parliament is now deliberating in a new home

THE MEMBERS' DIVISION LOBBY IN THE COMMONS : The roof of this Lobby was brought down by the explosion which wrecked the Chamber ; and the floor is now piled high with charred debris and broken masses of mason[illegible]

THE DAMAGE TO THE ROOF OF WESTMINSTER HALL : This is the oldest part of the Houses of Parliament, which dates back to the twelfth century. Most of the historic timbered roof was saved by the devotion to duty of the London firemen who extinguished the flames which had broken out at this spot

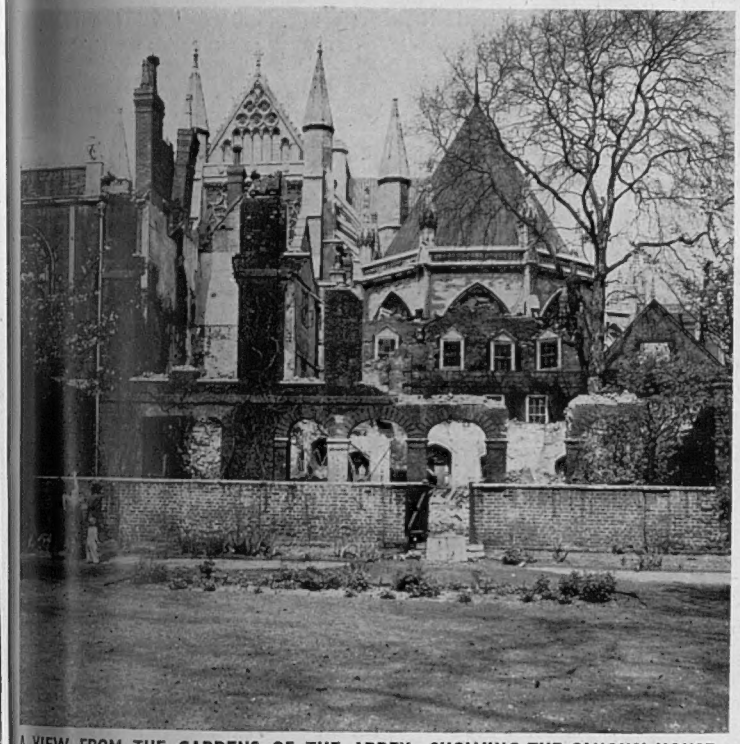
THE SHATTERED FACE OF BIG BEN : A small bomb hit the top of the Clock Tower just above the face of the clock. Some of the stonework and some of the ornamental ironwork above was badly damaged, and the face of the clock itself was dented and blackened. But, despite its severe battering, Big Ben itself is still keeping perfect time and striking normally



ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE WALL OF THE COMMONS : Only the scorched and blackened walls remain, as seen above. The Chamber was hit by a high-explosive bomb as well as a fire-bomb and has been reduced to a heap of rubble, in which very little of the former edifice remains

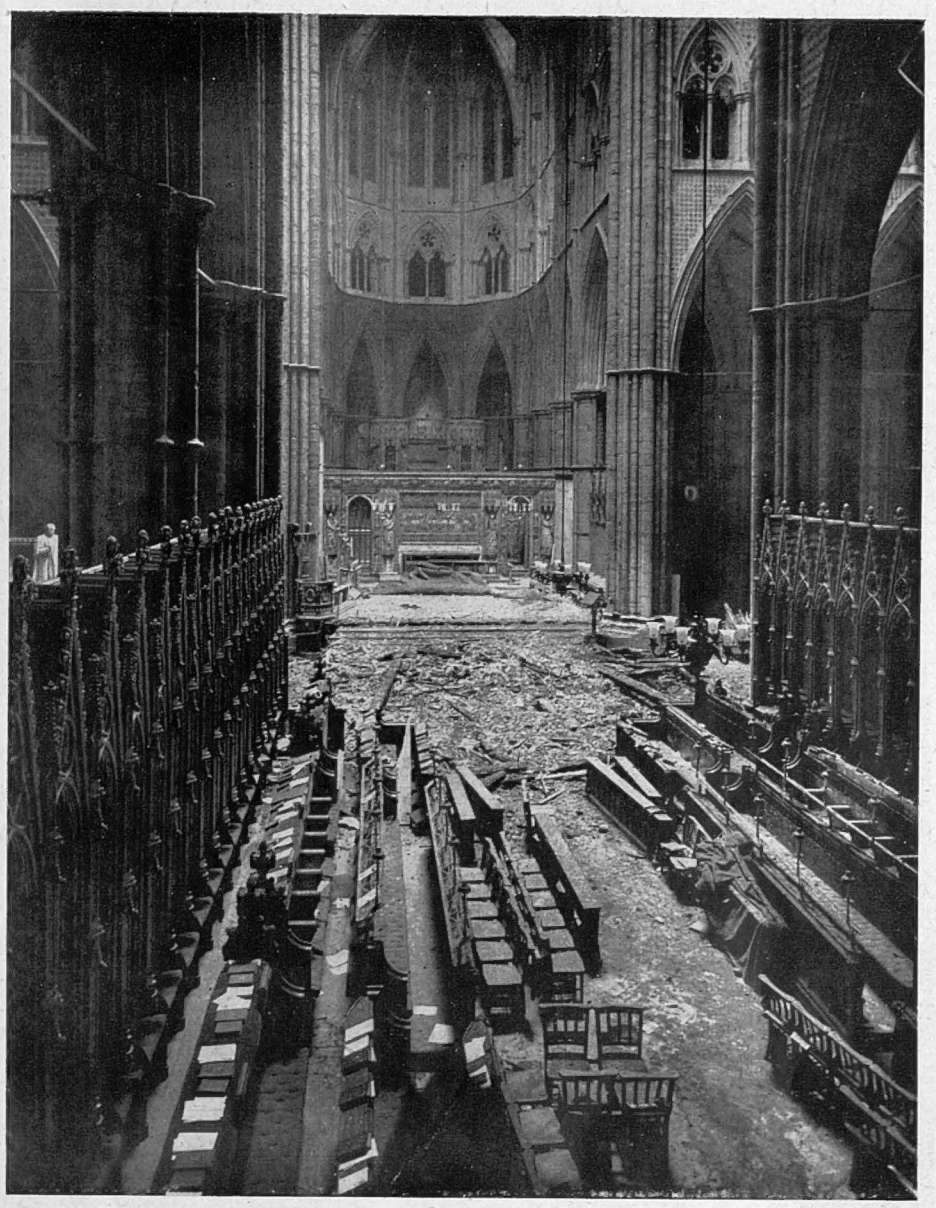
Destruction Wrought in Westminster

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY: CLEARING UP THE FALLEN ROOF: The statues near the Pulpit are undamaged, and workmen have now cleared away the wreckage: the gap in the roof will soon be covered temporarily and services will then be resumed



A VIEW FROM THE GARDENS OF THE ABBEY, SHOWING THE CANONS' HOUSE: The home of the Dean of Westminster has been severely damaged as a result of the raid, together with three other houses in Little Cloisters—Canon Barry's House, Dr. Bullock, the Organist's, house, and the house of the Precentor, the Rev. C. Armitage. All were burnt out as a result of fire-bombs

AN EXTERIOR VIEW OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL: Dean's Yard, and the Abbey precincts generally, suffered severely as a result of the high-explosive and fire-bombs which were showered down by the enemy bombers. This is all that remains of one portion of historic Westminster School



A VIEW FROM THE ORGAN LOFT IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY: Showing the Choir Stalls and the High Altar: The Stalls and Altar were begrimed but unharmed. The damage to the fabric of the Abbey is stated to be not irreparable, although no permanent repairs will be made during the war

WESTMINSTER UPPER SCHOOL DESTROYED BY FIRE-BOMBS: The interior of the Upper School, formerly the old Monks' Dormitory, where the ancient ceremony of Tossing the Pancake was held, has completely gone—only the exterior walls remaining in a damaged condition. In this picture is seen the still undamaged Rose Window at the South Side of the Abbey

THE WAR IN THE AIR

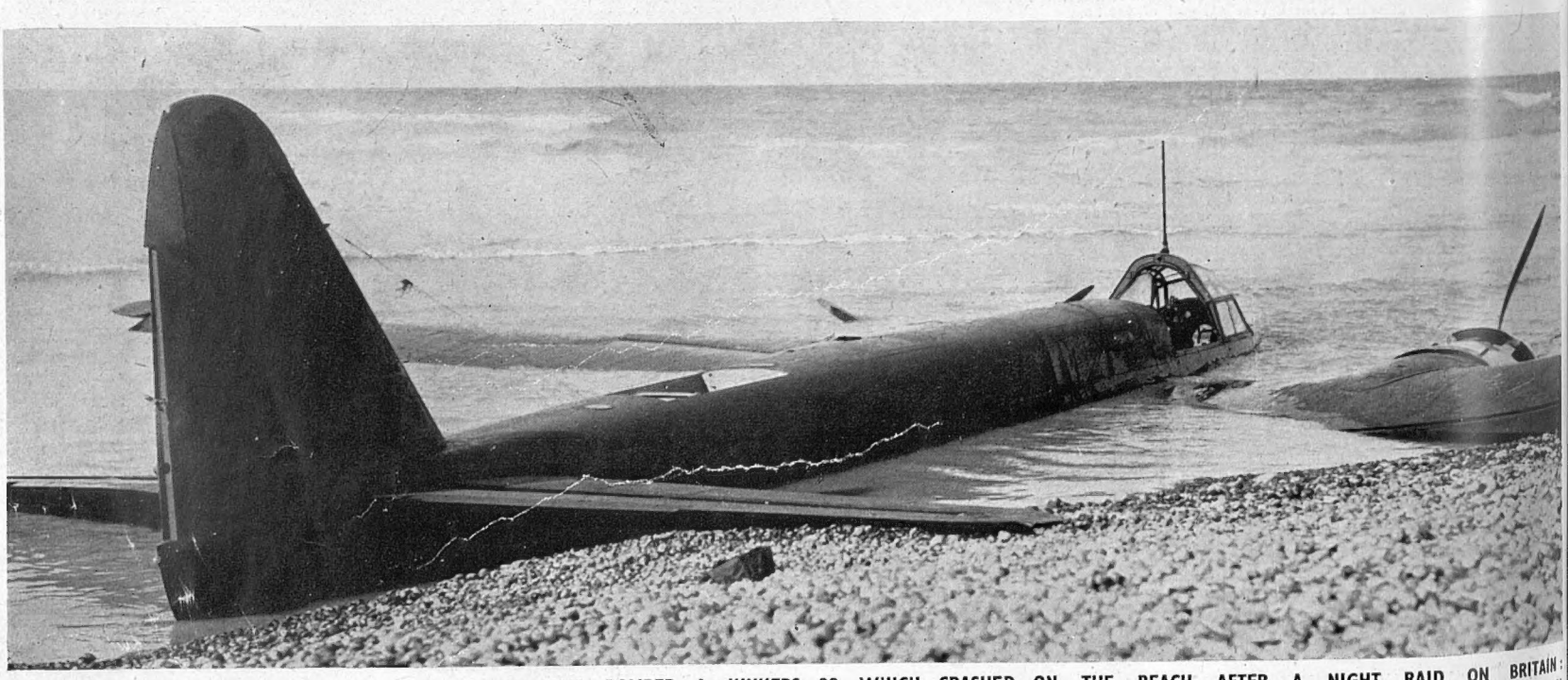
Beating the Night Bombers by Night Fighters

THE KING WITH THE NIGHT FIGHTERS: Talking to a crack pilot, who has already been decorated for his prowess in attacking the enemy night raiders

THE KING WITH A GROUP OF NIGHT-FIGHTER PILOTS BEFORE THEY ACTUALLY TOOK OFF TO ENGAGE THE RAIDERS: During his visit last week to a night-fighter station, the King was introduced to some of our crack night-fighter pilots. After supper he made a tour of the Station and inspected machines and personnel. He chatted to some of the pilots before they took off and brought down a total of 22 bombers in the one night. These are some of the men who achieved this great victory

AN ENEMY RAIDER BROUGHT DOWN BY A NIGHT FIGHTER: One of the 124 bombers brought down in ten nights over Britain. Pilots of seven nationalities are now engaged on the task of combating the enemy bombers by night

A HEINKEL III BOMBER SHOT DOWN AT NIGHT: This is believed to have been destroyed by a Polish night-fighter pilot. One member of the crew was killed, two escaped without injury and were captured, and one was wounded



BROUGHT DOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE SEA: A NAZI BOMBER—A JUNKERS 88—WHICH CRASHED ON THE BEACH AFTER A NIGHT RAID ON BRITAIN: With the moonlit nights of May, the figures of enemy aircraft destroyed by night fighters during and after raids on this country have gone soaring up. One hundred and twenty-four are known to have been destroyed within the first ten days of the present month

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WILL IT BE THE TURN OF THE UKRAINE NEXT?

Some Facts about a Little-Known, but Immensely Rich, Land and Its Attraction for Hitler To-day: Described by DONALD COWIE, *and Specially Illustrated*

IN a recent speech Mr. Churchill observed that Germany might soon threaten the Ukraine. Since then news has reached London of the formation of a Ukrainian Legion in German-occupied Poland, and the extension of the Ukrainian Bureau in Berlin. This has been accompanied by rumours of the arrival of a Nazi mechanised division in Finland, and of Russian measures to stop the flow of war materials across to Germany from Japan. What does it all mean, and why, particularly, should Hitler bother at this juncture about the enigmatic Ukraine?

Perhaps everything depends upon the outcome of the present German effort to secure the oil of Iraq and Iran by the twin-pronged movement from the Balkans and North Africa. There is no doubt that the enemy does need a greater oil supply above all things—so that he may face a long war with a completely self-contained economy—and possibly he thinks to-day that the wells of Iraq and Iran are within easiest reach.

But already it may be appearing to the German General Staff that the route to Iraq and Iran is not altogether an easy one. Therefore the German alternative plan for oil may well be put into operation at any moment—a drive through the Ukraine from Rumania and Poland to the Caucasus, accompanied by air and submarine attacks across the Black Sea from Rumanian and Bulgarian vantage-points (all of which have been carefully prepared for months). Such an operation would have many advantages, as well as several good German reasons.

The advantages would include a final settlement with Soviet Russia, which has recently become increasingly evasive and intractable from the German point of view, and the opening-up of the valuable Ukrainian granary and source of raw materials, not to mention the outflanking of Turkey and our own Middle Eastern position.

Long before Hitler planned his recent European conquests, he was talking and writing about the Ukraine. Here was one of the most fertile and productive regions in the world, a country larger than France, capable of supplying a Greater Reich with just those commodities which its economy might most dangerously lack, and it was within easy striking distance. Let us examine these facts in a little more detail.

A SPECIAL "SPHERE" SECTION

THE PRIME MINISTER'S TWO WARNINGS DURING APRIL ABOUT THE UKRAINE

"It is, of course, very hazardous to try to forecast in what direction, or directions, Hitler will employ his military machine in the present year. . . . But there are many signs which point to a Nazi attempt to secure the granary of the Ukraine and the oil-fields of the Caucasus as a German means of gaining the resources wherewith to wear down the English-speaking world. . . ."

Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons, April 9, 1941.

"The war may spread to Spain and Morocco. It may spread eastward to Turkey and Russia. The Germans may lay their hands for a time upon the granaries of the Ukraine or the oil wells of the Caucasus. They may dominate the Black Sea, they may dominate the Caspian"

Mr. Churchill in a broadcast speech on April 27, 1941

GERMANY AND RUSSIA NOW STAND FACE TO FACE FROM THE BALTIC TO THE BLACK SEA

Since the outbreak of the war, without fighting Russia has acquired a completely new set of frontiers in Europe and the acquisition of vast territories. Half of Poland and the whole of Bessarabia are hers, and thousands of new citizens have been enrolled within the Soviet. But she now has no buffers between her and Germany, owing to the territorial gains of both Powers; and Ukraine is wide open on two sides to any aggressive movement on the part of the Nazis. From this point of view, the Russian position must be regarded as a serious one for her—because Hitler would not hesitate to invade the Ukraine if it suited his purpose (as Mr. Churchill has indicated) despite the existence of a Non-Aggression Pact with Russia

A SCENE IN THE UKRAINE: A recent view of the wheatfields, showing a scene in which the Soviet delights—a "travelling newspaper office," with reporters and printing press complete, where a daily news bulletin is produced, "in order that the workers may be kept *au fait* with the latest news during their long working hours" (!)

To-day the Ukraine produces (as sample instances) some 10,800,000 tons of wheat annually, or 7·8 per cent. of the world's total, and 19,100,000 tons of potatoes, or 9 per cent. of the world's total. The equable climate and black soil of those alluvial plains have made a rich larder here for Russia and south-eastern Europe since the beginning of European history. To-day, however, what lies under that black soil is even more important.

No fewer than 60,000,000 tons of coal are produced by the Ukraine each year, 13,800,000 tons of iron ore, 1,500,000 tons of petroleum, 6,000,000 tons of pig-iron, 5,300,000 tons of steel and 1,100,000 tons of the precious manganese ore. A quarter of the world's sugar is produced here, and a fifth of the world's hydro-electric energy.

What about the Ukrainian nationalist movement? It is, in view of the present situation, very important indeed. Hitler likes to attack countries which have internal difficulties. Hitherto the rest of the world has not

(*Continued on following page*)

ON A LARGE RUSSIAN "COLLECTIVE FARM" IN THE UKRAINE: It is not difficult to see the reasons for a possible invasion of this rich land. It is one of the most fertile places on earth, and it is also rich in mineral resources. As a granary for Germany, the Ukraine would supply the population as well as the war machine with many of their needs

(*Continued from preceding page*)

taken much notice of politics in the Ukraine—has hardly had the opportunity, considering that Moscow has carefully shielded the affairs of the Ukraine from the outside world—but the fact is that for centuries the Ukrainians have been trying to secure independence.

They are, ethnologically, not Muscovite Russians at all, but a distinct people, with about the same blood relationship to Russians proper as, say, the Italians have to the French. They boast their own language, customs, literature. To-day only 9 per cent. of the 52,000,000 Ukrainian population is of pure Russian origin.

That is not to say they would welcome a German occupation. Few of them can forget 1917 and the Prussian jackboot then—the world should remember that under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk all the Ukraine was taken at once by Germany—but downtrodden races are apt to seize any chance of salvation. So Goebbels' agents have been at work in the Ukraine for years. Only the other day it was announced in German-occupied Poland that Ukrainians there would be given "full citizenship" equal to the *Volksdeutsche* themselves.

Russia took Eastern Poland and Bessarabia just so that she might meet a German attack on the Ukraine, but such an attack would still be a comparatively simple operation, especially in view of the oft-revealed inefficiency of the Soviet forces.

THE MENACE TO THE UKRAINE—*continued*

TYPICAL RUSSIAN PEASANTS OF THE UKRAINE: Workers on the Korotich Collective Farm at Kopomur, near the city of Kharkov

From Rumania, through the coastal strip above Odessa, there is a perfect route for swift-moving mechanised columns. Perhaps the Germans would not stir from Poland, for fear of being taken in flank by the central forces of the Soviet, but simultaneously with the Ukrainian move they might take over Finland, hoping to lure those forces northwards. Once through the Ukraine, it would be a simple matter to cut off the Soviet armies of the Caucasus, then round them up and proceed to the occupation of the oil-fields.

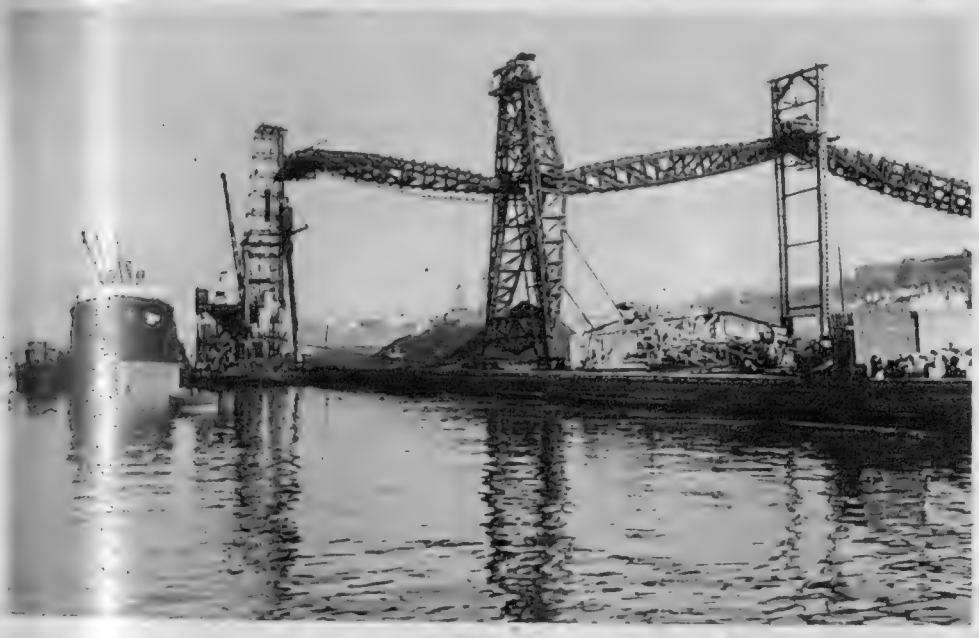
The chief objection to these possibilities is that they would stretch the German armies still further. But a conqueror must keep moving, and Hitler still has vast reserves of men. Possibly he may feel, after the Balkans campaign, that he has not much to fear from our intervention on the Continent for the meantime. By threatening the British Isles, on the one hand, and Egypt on the other, he may hope to keep us pinned down and helpless to intervene decisively.

Still, the lesson of history is that every European conqueror has sooner or later stubbed his toe irremediably against the sprawling mass of Russia. It seems to be a fatal attraction. And if Hitler is forced to divert his attentions from the Middle East to the Ukraine, we may have some justification for breathing freely at last.

A TYPICAL SCENE IN THE UKRAINE, THE FERTILE DISTRICT WHICH IS "THE GRANARY OF RUSSIA," AND ONE OF THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN THE WORLD

IN THE MARTI SHIP-REPAIRING WORKS AT ODESSA: The Lenin Memorial, recently erected in the great Black Sea port. At this city many of the merchantmen of Russia are constructed. Odessa now lies perilously close to the German hordes

KIEV, CAPITAL OF THE UKRAINE: This great city stands on the River Dnieper; it is one of the oldest and richest cities of Russia. This picture shows the old commercial quarter of Podol—one of the three principal parts of the city. The big building in the foreground is a bakery erected by the Communists



IN THE PORT OF ODESSA: COAL BEING LOADED AT THE QUAYSIDE FOR EXPORT: The most considerable port on the Black Sea, Odessa is one of the outlets for the rich storehouse of the Ukraine. The volume of its shipping is very considerable

DNIEPROPETROVSK: Curious-looking flats for "student-workers," recently erected in this great iron-producing centre in the Ukraine. Communism has produced its own very distinctive type of architecture throughout Russia

IN THE DJERZINSKY SQUARE AT KHARKOV: MOTORISED INFANTRY ON PARADE: The city of Kharkov is situated in one of the most populous and fertile districts in the whole of Russia, and in the pre-Soviet era was famous for its great Fairs. Despite the show of military might which the Soviet have maintained for many years past, it is probable that Russia would fare very badly in the event of war with Germany should that country decide to "acquire" the granaries of the Ukraine—and, as Mr. Churchill has pointed out on two recent occasions, that war is now looming ever closer!

ONE OF THE NEW SHOWPLACES OF KHARKOV: The recently-erected "House of Industry," an example of modern Communist architecture which contains no fewer than thirteen stories

LOOKING AFT ON BOARD A BRITISH FLOTILLA LEADER, SHOWING THE BOAT GEAR AND THE CARLEY FLOATS STOWED BETWEEN THE FUNNELS

WHY DESTROYER LOSSES are HIGH

Vulnerability Caused by Specialised Design—*By* F. B.

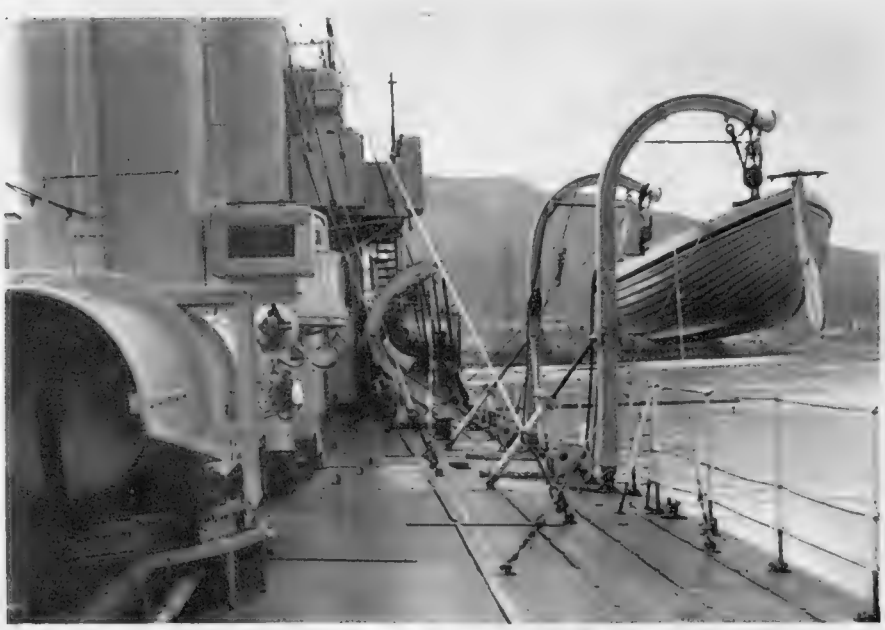
THE destroyer service is one of the most popular in the Navy, but nobody can pretend that it is either restful or safe. As it is impossible to give a destroyer any armour protection, she is very vulnerable to gunfire. Everything possible is done with internal subdivision by unpierced watertight bulkheads, but the nature of her work makes it necessary to give her at least one or two very long compartments, and if one of these is flooded an immense amount of water is admitted.

With her tremendous boiler power the destroyer has excellent pumps and can eject large quantities of water, but the boilers are vulnerable, and it is impossible to keep them below the waterline, covered by an armoured deck, as they are in bigger ships.

The great length of a destroyer is naturally a factor of weakness when she is stricken by mine or torpedo, but everything possible is done to give the hull the greatest longitudinal strength, and in spite of the greater weights and infinitely greater power a disaster like that of H.M.S. *Cobra*, which broke her back in a gale, is inconceivable. The destroyer can survive any weather, but she is not comfortable.

On the other hand, the explosion of an up-to-date mine is very likely to break the back of even bigger ships than the destroyers, and a heavy modern torpedo may easily have the same effect. When that happens it is only magnificent subdivision of the ship's hull which keeps her afloat long enough to get her people away. Life-saving gear has to take second place to offensive features, guns and torpedoes, and the destroyer is such an over-packed " box of tricks " that it is very difficult to find space for boats. They all have to be suspended under davits on the sides of the ship, for she has not the facilities to hoist them out from inboard stowage like a battleship. The boats are among the finest fitted in the Navy and are most of them provided with motors, but they are liable to be riddled in action, particularly at close quarters.

In addition to the destroyer's boats there are the Carley floats —large copper tubular rings with a net suspended inside them— which are stowed in every convenient position in such a way that they will float off if the ship goes down and can support quite a large number of men. They are all in the water, of course, and may be bitterly cold, but any number owe their lives to the floats, which have the advantage of stowing anywhere and in any position. Unlike the submarine, the destroyer very seldom works absolutely single-handed, so that in the event of disaster there is nearly always a ship of some sort reasonably close at hand to rescue survivors. If she is not working in company, the destroyer has the same facilities for calling help as any other ship.



LOOKING FORWARD ON THE STARBOARD SIDE OF A BRITISH FLOTILLA LEADER: THE AFTER DAVITS HAVE A BOAT READY FOR LAUNCHING; THE FORWARD DAVITS ARE INBOARD, THE BOAT HAVING BEEN LOWERED

WHEN the NAVY CARRIES OUT A BOMBARDMENT

The Terrific Detail Work Involved, in which all Branches Must Co-operate—*Described by* FRANK BOWEN

THIS war is seeing the Navy engaged more and more in the bombardment of shore positions, especially in the Mediterranean, and what the Fleet calls " strafing " makes an interesting variety to the constant watching. In addition it has produced excellent results in very widely differing circumstances. The bombardment of a shore position is one of the naval operations which can be planned down to the tiniest detail in advance, whereas Fleet actions only permit general plans changeable at the shortest notice, and their success generally depends on how precisely the scheme can be carried into effect. The first thing is to possess accurate maps.

That was often a very great difficulty during the late war, and in the Dardanelles operations our bombardments were usually handicapped by the care that the Turks had taken to prevent scientific cartography by foreigners and to have all their own maps carefully inaccurate. The advanced technique of aerial photography has very largely overcome this, but it is still difficult to obtain the exact knowledge of inland contours which is so necessary for indirect gunfire. All the maps used are divided into numbered squares so that a very brief message will contain a lot of information. It is equally necessary to make a minute study of the charts offshore to find safe courses clear of sandbanks, to estimate the influence of currents, and to consider a score of other things. The latest information concerning enemy minefields is naturally of prime importance, as is also a knowledge of the areas where the defensive batteries can concentrate their fire.

The part which each ship is to play in the bombardment is carefully rehearsed on large-scale maps and discussed with the officers of all the departments concerned, especially the navigators, gunnery officers and airmen.

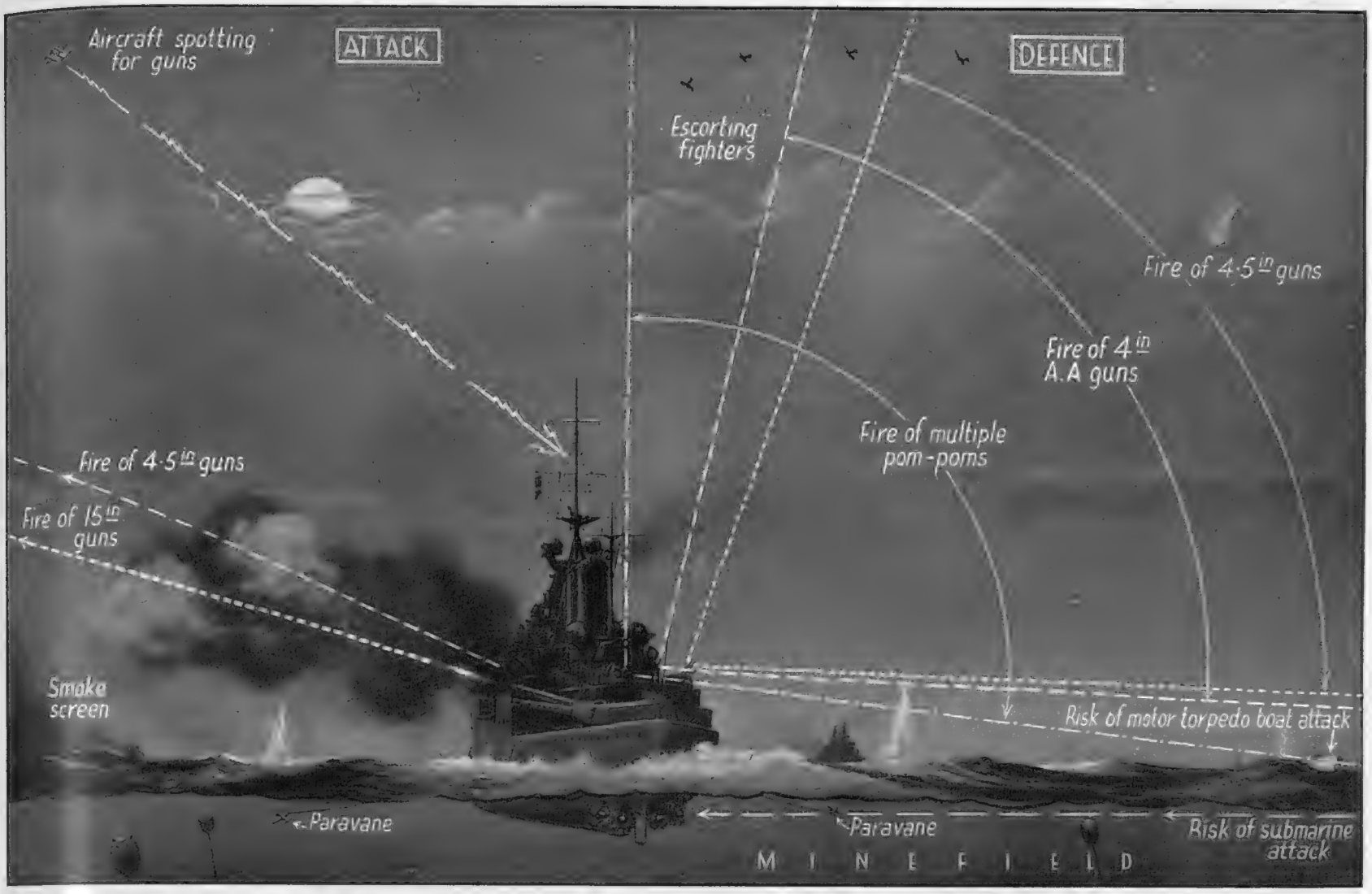
With long-range gunnery it is always necessary to adjust the aim by observing the fall of the last salvo, so that the spotting planes have a very important part. On the other hand, it is very difficult when six or ten or twenty ships are firing as fast as their guns can be loaded and accurately laid, to distinguish which ship's shells have fallen short and which have gone over the target and to wireless back the necessary corrections. The spotting planes are also relied upon for special information. The reply of one battery may be slackening and a few more salvos will finish it. A fire may have been started on a small scale in one corner of the base—on the windward side, if luck is with us — and a concentration of fire will convert this into a gigantic conflagration. Troops may be massing in a hundred unexpected positions and a few big shells will do a world of good. The ships cannot see details of this kind even from the control positions at the tops of their masts, especially when they are enveloped in a smoke-screen.

A BRITISH BATTLESHIP DISCHARGES A BROADSIDE: H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign* firing " ripples " during the 1914-18 War

It is easy to understand how much depends on the absolute accuracy of the navigators, in whom the gunners must put implicit trust for their position. It may be taken for granted that the enemy will have moved all the usual lights, buoys and other aids to navigation, or, worse still, will have shifted them to misleading positions, so that where possible a small ship will have sneaked in the night before, as Nelson himself did before Copenhagen, and placed private navigation marks of a very inconspicuous nature. This demands particularly fine navigation, and in any circumstances it is often impossible, for surprise is generally the great factor in the success of a bombardment. The range, speed and other details are varied as much as possible with every operation undertaken, for any tendency to drop into a groove and to adopt a routine gives the enemy a better chance to prepare counter measures and also greatly reduces the moral effect.

Shorter range and slower speed are naturally of great advantage in scoring hits, but they also involve a very much greater chance of sacrificing the ships. Both are therefore the subject of constant changes on a prearranged plan, while the circumstances of the action may demand an entirely new set of changes on the signals of the flagship. The big ship's 15-in. shells, each weighing rather more than 1,900 lb., are the main factor, but the vicious 50-lb. 4·7-in. shells rained in at high speed by destroyers dashing in and out of the smoke-screens are most demoralising to the troops and gunners. Heavy air bombs may also play a big part, as they did at Genoa.

During bombarding operations the ships are naturally in the greatest danger all the time, and the most careful and sustained precautions are necessary. The navigators, gunners and signal staff are working at the highest pressure and have little chance to see the show beyond their own particular department, but to watch progress is naturally the greatest temptation, often reduced by the wall of smoke, to the men in the defensive and look-out positions. Yet the slightest relaxation of their particular job means great danger to the ship, and this is one of the occasions which prove the value of the discipline of the fully-trained man against the enthusiasm and excitement of equally gallant youngsters.



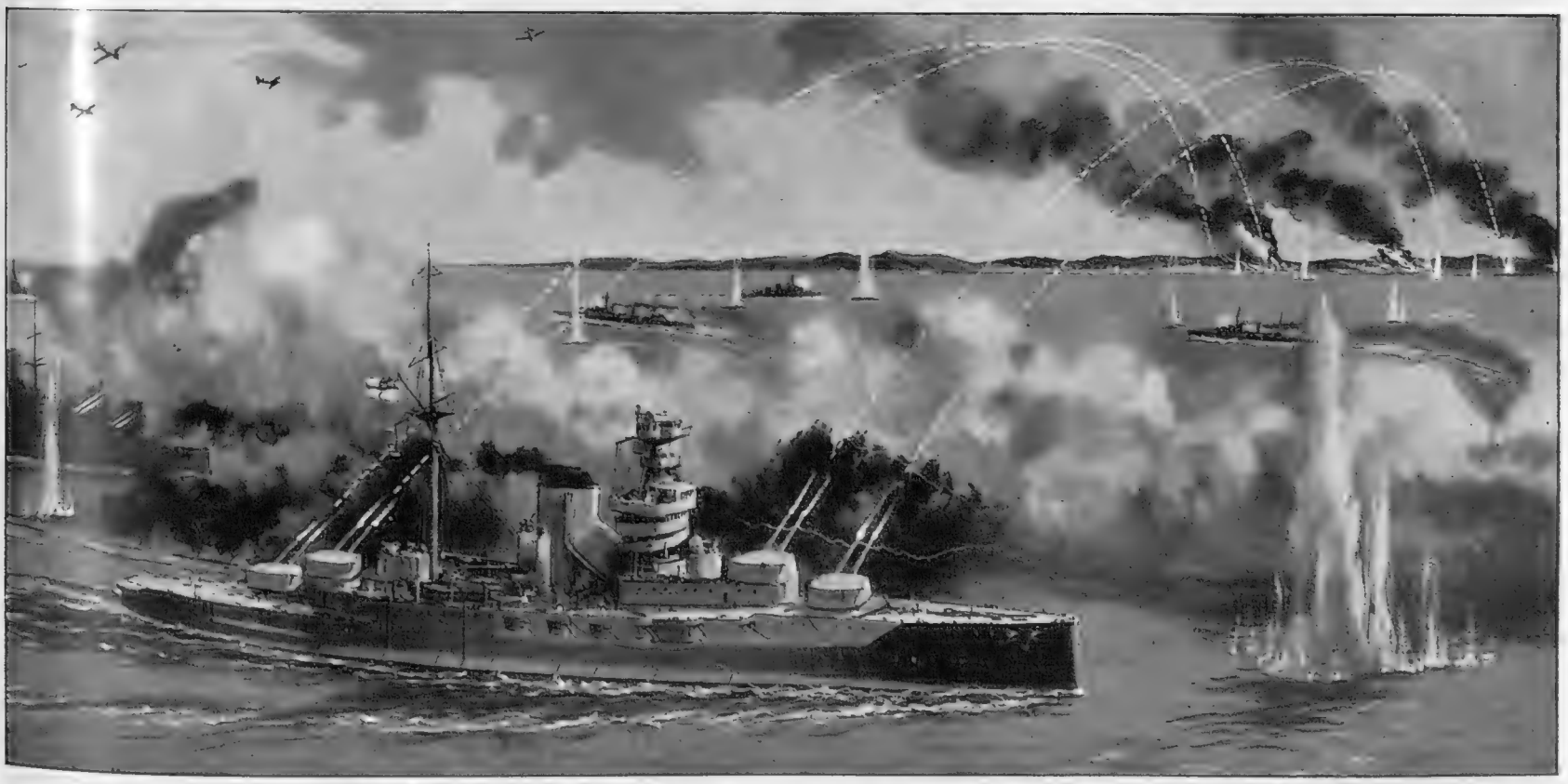
WHEN A CAPITAL SHIP IS ENGAGED ON A BOMBARDMENT SHE HAS TWO MAIN FUNCTIONS TO PERFORM—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

Let us assume that H.M.S. *Renown* is engaged against a land target: she is armed with six 15-in. guns; eight 4·5-in. dual-purpose guns; twelve 4-in. anti-aircraft guns; and eighteen multiple pom-poms and machine guns. One half of the ship will be engaged in the actual bombardment, firing the big 15-in. and the smaller, but harassing 4·5-in. guns: working in conjunction with these will be the spotting aircraft, transmitting signals by wireless to the Control Tower. The other half of the ship will have its own little war to conduct—a defensive war: this must be conducted quite irrespective of what is going on on the other side! Again 4·5-in. guns will be in play, together with the 4-in. A.-A. guns and the pom-poms; but this time it will be to ward off attack by enemy aircraft: and at the same time, there is danger from enemy surface craft, or E-boats, and from submarines and mines!

The first danger in modern operations is from air attack, so that the crew of the A.-A. guns must never relax their scanning of the skies. This is a big nervous and physical strain at any time, but it is greatly increased by the concussion of the big guns firing their salvos close at hand. Everything is ready to open a terrific fire should dive-bombers appear, and that means a lot of ammunition exposed to enemy shells. Our own fighter planes, generally from the aircraft-carriers, will be constantly circling overhead.

There is also a big danger from submarine attack from either side. The look-outs on the offshore side have to concentrate their attention against every distraction, while those on the inshore side are handicapped by the smoke and by splashes in the water which, seen through the drift, are easily mistaken for the feather of a submarine's periscope. Motor torpedo-boats, with their high speed, are also a grave danger, and the crews of the pom-poms and machine-guns must give them as much attention as they give the aircraft. The inevitable presence of a powerful destroyer screen does not release anybody from the necessity of protecting his own ship.

Finally, there is the danger of shellfire from forts and shore batteries mounting guns as heavy, or probably heavier, than those mounted in the ships. Shore guns have a great advantage in mounting to permit extreme range, protection where weight is of far less importance than it is in a ship, and concealment. Their gunners have carefully worked out ranges for every square yard of the adjacent seas, and with observers in picked positions along the coastline they can get the position of every attacking ship to a yard. That, presumably, is why the Italians described as "cowardly" the successful British bombardment of the heavily-fortified base of Genoa!



HOW A NAVAL BOMBARDMENT AGAINST A LAND TARGET IS CARRIED OUT—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

The big ships, armed with 15-in. guns, cruise back and forth behind the smoke screens laid down by the destroyers and methodically shell the targets. The hits are being observed by spotting aircraft which circle overhead, and which signal corrections when necessary. Closer in shore, where their lighter guns can be most effective, the destroyers dash in and out of the smoke screen and add their smaller-calibre shells to the general bombardment. The trajectory of the 15-in. shells is so high that the destroyers can manœuvre between the capital ships and the shore in complete safety. High up, and above the spotting planes, fighter aircraft cruise on the alert for possible enemy bombing planes which might attempt to attack the bombarding vessels

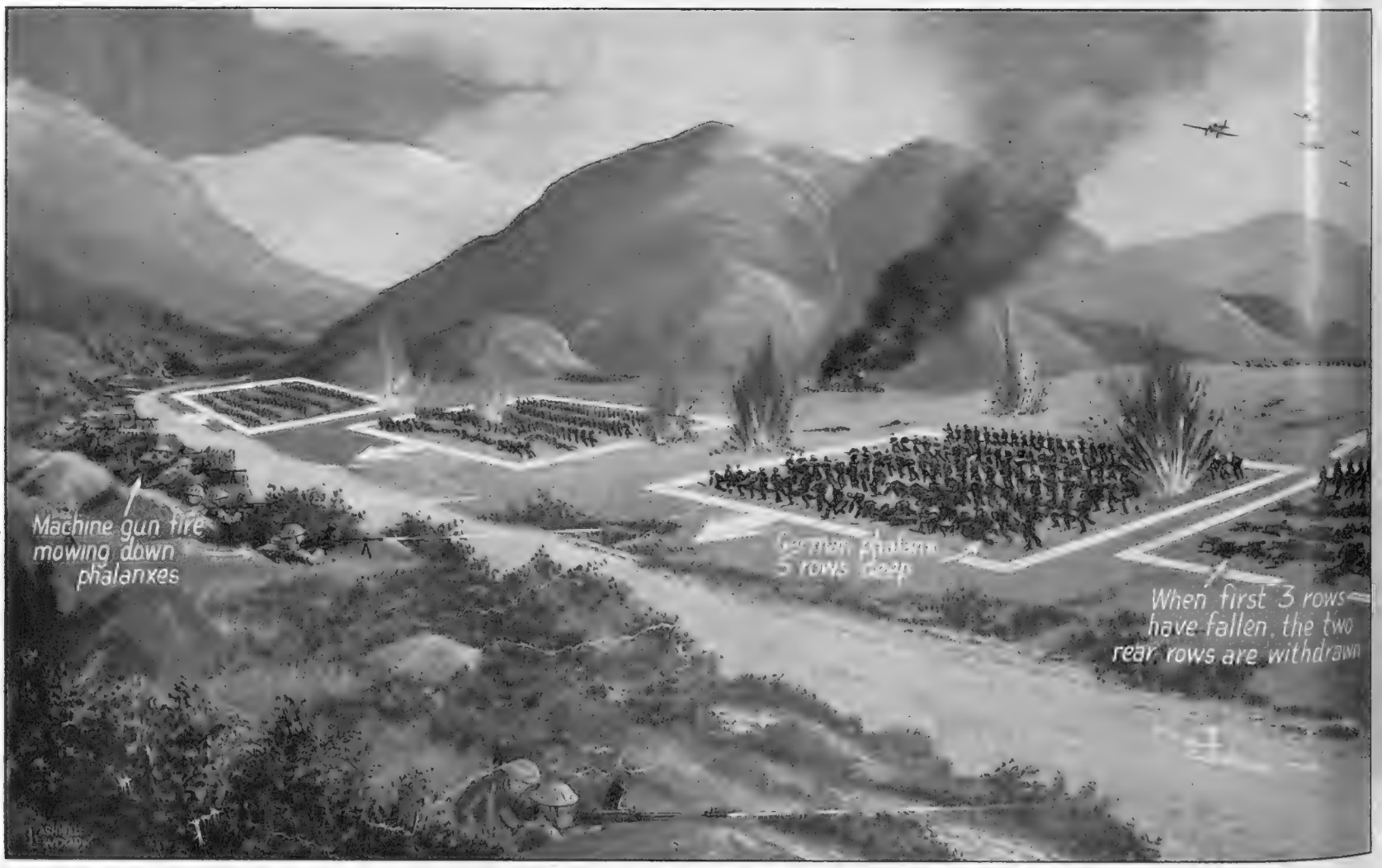
THIS METHOD OF ADVANCE WAS COMMENTED ON MANY TIMES IN REPORTS OF THE FIGHTING IN GREECE: The German phalanxes advanced five rows deep, and only withdrew after hundreds of their soldiers had been mown down by British soldiers in strongly defended positions

ENEMY INFANTRY TACTICS in GREECE

Regardless of Cost, Men were Mown Down in Swathes as they Advanced to the Attack

—Drawings by L. Ashwell Wood

The ruthless employment of foot soldiers was never more strikingly illustrated than in the recent campaign in Greece—and especially during the withdrawal of the British forces. Time after time correspondents have detailed the reckless manner in which attacks were made by the German commanders. In the mountains attempts were made to rush the defences by infantry packed in solid phalanxes four or five deep: many times three whole lines would be mown down in swathes before the two rear rows would be withdrawn. As one Australian said: "It was just like a movie": as they came along the roads or across the plains our gunners and riflemen gave it to them from all sides and "they went down like you see in the movies." The Germans evidently had the idea that sheer weight of numbers would tell, even against a heavily defended position such as that shown below; and that it would be quicker and less wasteful to adopt rush tactics right from the start, in the hope that the positions would fall at once. Faced with the traditional steadiness of the British and Australian forces, however, these methods failed. The cost to the enemy in dead and seriously wounded must have been terrific, despite what Hitler said to his recent complacent Reichstag when reporting on the Balkan campaign



IN THE MOUNTAIN PASSES THE GERMAN INFANTRY ATTEMPTED TO FORCE A PASSAGE BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS: The loss of men seemed nothing to the German commanders so long as they could bore a way through and clear away the opposition of our tanks, artillery and machine-guns

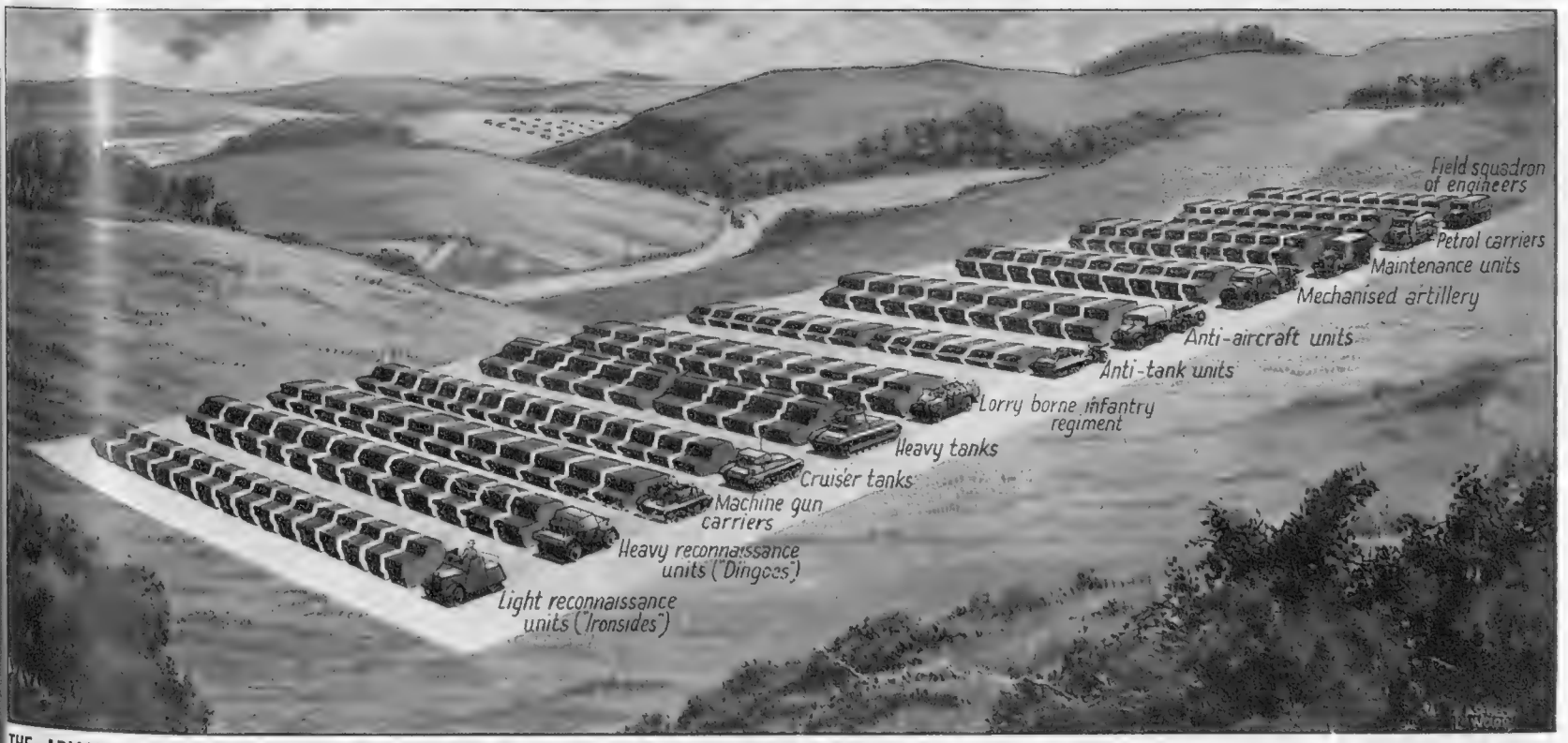
IN SMALL PARTIES, THREE DEEP, THE BRITISH SOLDIERS MOVE DOWN TO THE BAY, SUBJECTED THE WHILE TO INCESSANT DIVE-BOMBING ATTACKS FROM GREAT NUMBERS OF GERMAN AIRCRAFT AS THEY EVACUATE STEADILY FROM RAPTHIS

THE EVACUATION FROM RAPTHIS

With Enemy Planes Dive-Bombing the Retiring Troops on the Road Down to the Bay

—Drawing by Roland Davies

This port lies to the south-east of Athens: it was one of the small ports from which a considerable number of the British Army in Greece was evacuated in all sorts of odd craft. All day long the men would remain hidden among the rocks and poppy fields out of sight of German airmen. And all day long, these same airmen dropped magnetic mines into the harbour, bombed the docks and strafed every inch of road and every acre of the adjoining fields and then flew out to sea to meet the incoming armada which had been sent to rescue the B.E.F. As evening came on the men concealed in the fields and hills proceeded down to Rapthis Harbour. A major in command gave the order: "All proceed by the road, three abreast. If anybody falls out on account of bombing or machine-gunning he will be left behind." Then came a four-mile trek. When at last the armada put out of the Bay, the skies were guarded by fighters and fighter-bombers, which drove off the German dive-bombers in dog-fights



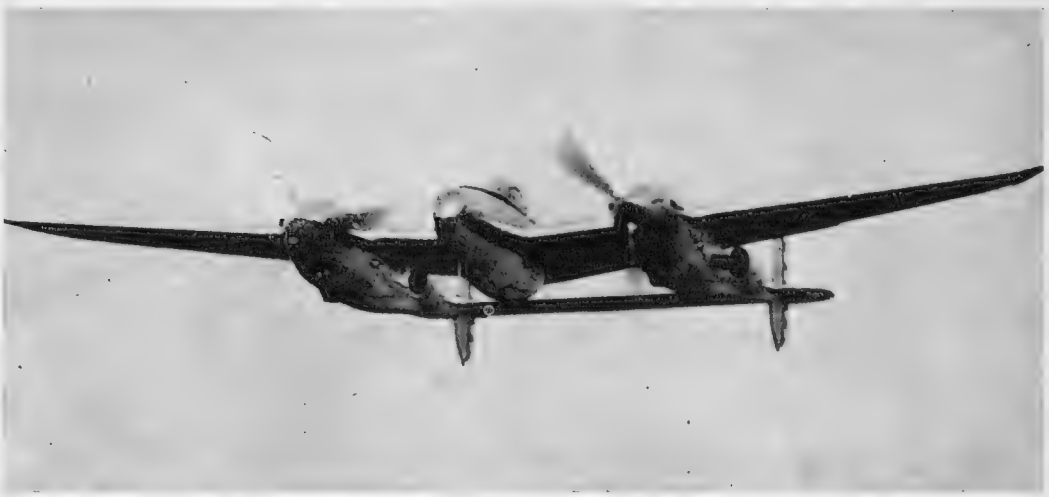
THE ARMOURED DIVISIONS WHICH BRITAIN IS FORMING AS A REPLY TO THE GERMAN PANZER DIVISIONS: A pictorial representation of one of these Divisions massed for the attack

—Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood

The British Armoured Divisions are now a powerful instrument and are considered to be capable of meeting the enemy with every chance of success. These Divisions are self-contained units which include the latest design of tank, mobile artillery, anti-aircraft and anti-tank units, as well as field squadrons of the Royal Engineers, lorry-borne infantry, and maintenance units. The "cruiser tank" is the standard fighting vehicle, and it is round this unit that the Divisions have been built. In gun-power and in armour, our Divisions are definitely superior to the Italian formations; and it is confidently expected that they will at least be a match for any of the German *Panzer* Divisions so far put into the field: the latter each include about 300 to 400 tanks of various designs and sizes

The LATEST from the UNITED STATES

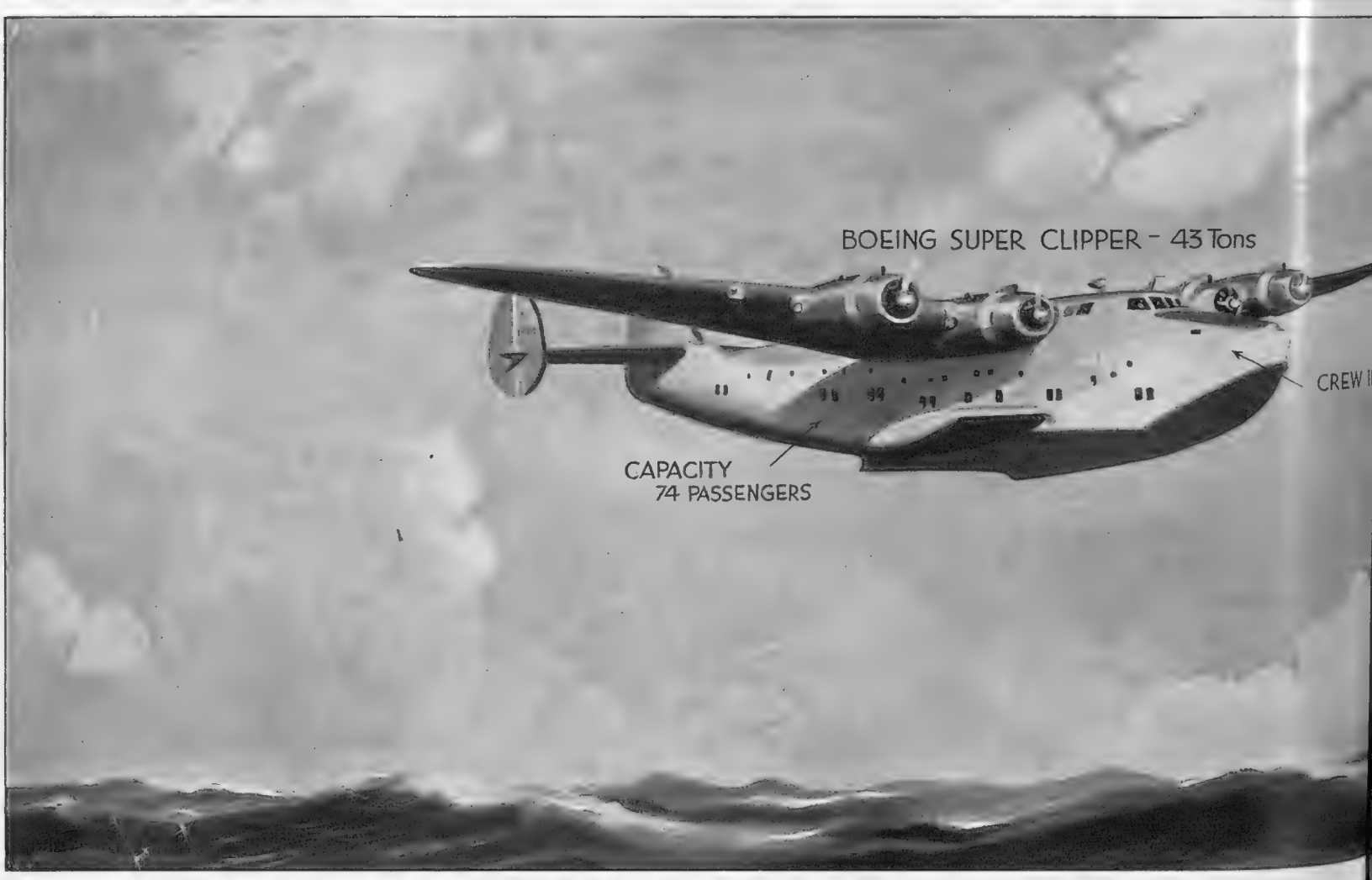
The Huge Boeing Super-Clipper, and the P.38 Single-Seat Fighter: With Further News of the Activities of Our Own Fine Flying-Boat, the Very Big and Capacious Short Sunderland



"THE FASTEST PLANE IN THE WORLD"—THE WONDERFUL NEW LOCKHEED P.38 SINGLE-SEAT TWO-MOTOR TRICYCLE FIGHTER: The American details supplied with this picture are as follows: "This plane, the fastest in the world, could travel from London to Hamm in less than an hour. Five hundred miles an hour is its record to date. It is the Lockheed P.38, 1,150-h.p. low-wing, double-engined monoplane. A feature of the aircraft is its tricycle landing-gear. The plane is pictured on its first record-breaking flight at Burbank, California. Actually some of these figures are liable to slight correction: its top speed, for instance, in level flight and at 16,000 ft., is 404 m.p.h., and this is obtained only through its very heavy wing-loading. An order for £15,000,000-worth of these aircraft has been placed with the Lockheed Company for the R.A.F. It is possible that the aircraft may then be arranged as a two-seat fighter with a gun turret aft; and that Rolls-Royce Merlin motors may take the place of the present comparatively new Allison motors at present installed. For armament at present there are two ·50 Colt machine guns with 500 rounds, two ·30 Colt machine guns with 1,000 rounds, and one 23-mm. Madsen cannon with 50 rounds. The aircraft has a cruising speed of 350 m.p.h.; and a range of 600 miles and ceiling of 30,000 ft."

On left—

THE COLOSSAL TAIL OF A SHORT SUNDERLAND: An idea of the huge size of these flying-boats can be gained from this picture. The top of the fin is 32 ft. 10½ in. from the ground: at the very end, with wonderful visibility, is the rear gunner's turret, power-operated and rotating. Four guns have been installed here—a very powerful sting indeed. In fact, this big flying-boat simply bristles with guns; and its patrols are not diverted by any fighters the enemy may despatch to its attack



THE HUGE BOEING SUPER-CLIPPER, OF WHICH BRITAIN HAS NOW BOUGHT THREE FROM THE UNITED STATES—*Drawing by*

Six of these huge aircraft were being built by the Boeing Company of Seattle for Pan-American Airways, for civil aviation purposes: Britain has purchased three of them. Captain J. C. Kelly-Rogers, the famous British Atlantic pilot, was aboard one of the three on its flight from the factory to New York, *via* California and Miami, with eight other British airmen on board. He expressed himself as delighted with its performance. Actually, the 43-ton monster was handled by the American pilot, Captain Harold Gray, and an American crew of ten; the flying time for the journey of 4,500 miles was 27 hours. It is stated that the Super-Clipper can carry 74 passe faster than the Clippers now being used on the passenger service engined, with Wright Cyclones of 1,550-h.p. each: they have a Beneath the high main wing are smaller wings which act as stab there are two decks

THE SHORT SUNDERLAND FLYING-BOAT PLAYS ITS PART IN THE EVACUATION FROM GREECE : Eighty-five men at a time taken off during the departure from the Greek beaches—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

Known for its work with the Coastal Command and for its far-reaching patrols out over the Atlantic and over Norway and elsewhere, the Short Sunderland has now added to its achievements by participating in the evacuation of the British-Imperial Forces from Greece. The carrying capacity of these huge flying-boats has always been a thing of wonder : on one single trip from the Greek beaches, however, a Sunderland distinguished itself by taking off no fewer than 85 men in one single trip ! And this despite the danger from enemy aircraft which were never absent for long during the evacuation. Within this flying battleship—one of the best produced by this country—there are two decks : both must have been crammed to capacity with such a load aboard. The method by which this feat was achieved is indicated by Mr. Davies in the drawing above

addition to its crew of 11 : it is heavier and e Atlantic. The aircraft of this type are four- 190 m.p.h. and a considerable range of action. en the vessel is taxying on the water : within

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SHORT SUNDERLAND DECIDES TO TAKE OFFENSIVE ACTION

The bombs on the Sunderland are usually stored internally : when an objective has been sighted, these are slid out on their mobile racks to the "action position" under the wings. They are then controlled by the bomb-aimer who is seated in the extreme nose of the huge aircraft. In this picture note the small propellers at the front of each bomb and the big stabilising fins at the rear

PORTUGAL BECOMES ALARMED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF A NAZI SWOOP ON THE AZORES: Portugal has recently taken steps to prevent a Nazi swoop on the Azores, the Portuguese islands in the Atlantic which would be of great use to Hitler in the Battle of the Atlantic. Troops have been sent from Lisbon to reinforce the garrison in the islands, and before they sailed they were inspected by Dr. Salazar, the Portuguese Premier. Here he is seen (in black hat), with his Under-Secretary for War, Captain Santos Costa, at the inspection

NOTES ON THE U.S. PATROL AND CONVOY

CONVOYING by U.S. ships first suggested for 300-mile neutrality zone round America, fixed by the Pan-American Congress at outbreak of war, but not taken seriously as the zone had no standing in International Law.

Neutrality patrol by U.S. naval and coastguard ships and aircraft substituted for convoy suggestion.

Nobody knew what they could do except save lives, but excellent training for war.

President Roosevelt at election expressly rejected convoys.

Convoy suggestion revived with Lease-and-Lend Bill, but very strongly opposed as leading to open war.

Action of Japanese Navy in convoying German merchant ship from China to Japan made great impression and modified opinion.

21-4-41. Senate Foreign Relations Committee instructed State Department to consider convoying.

The NEUTRALITY PATROL of the ATLANTIC by the U.S.

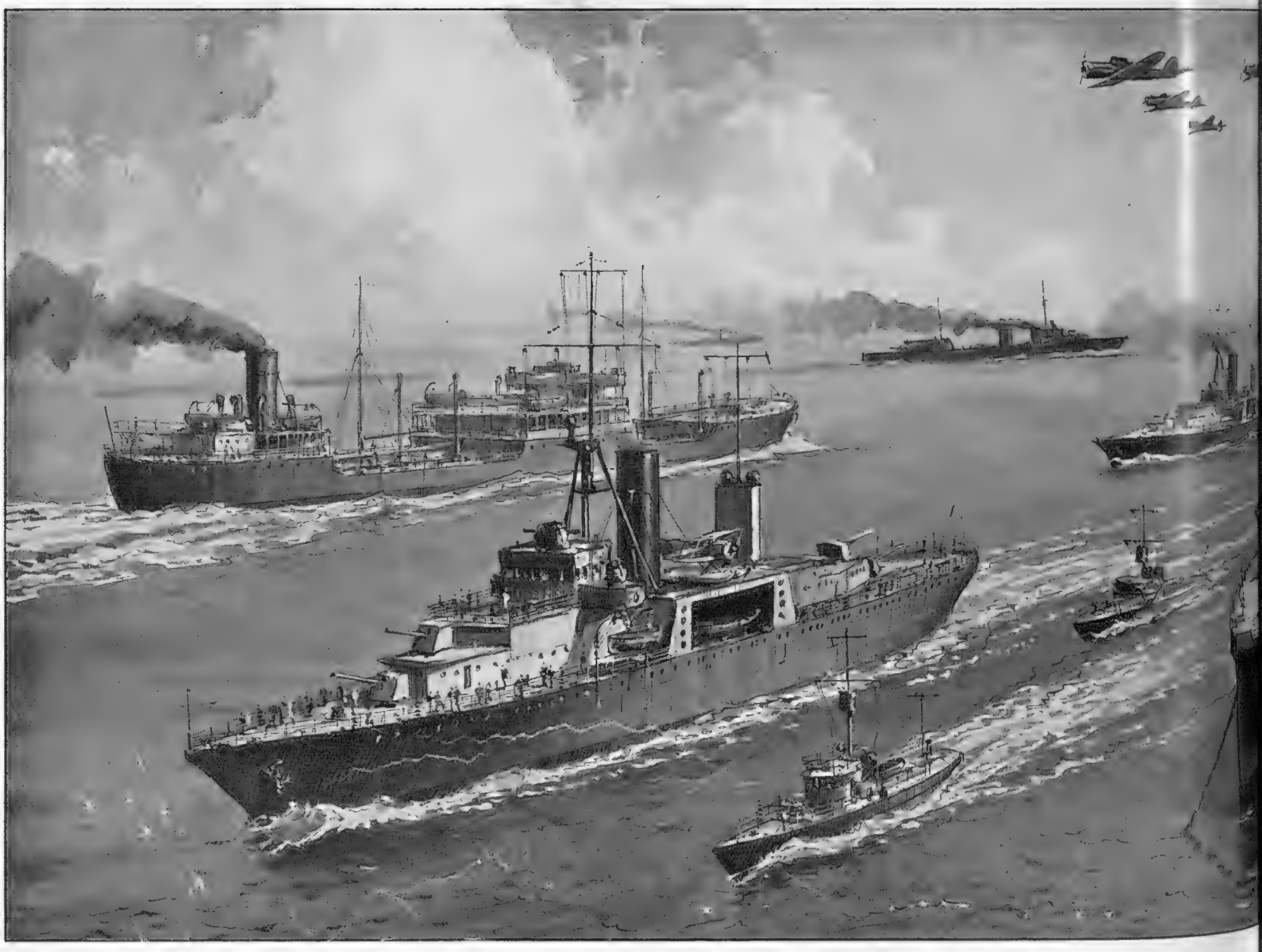
How it will Operate, and the American Naval Vessels which will Take Part

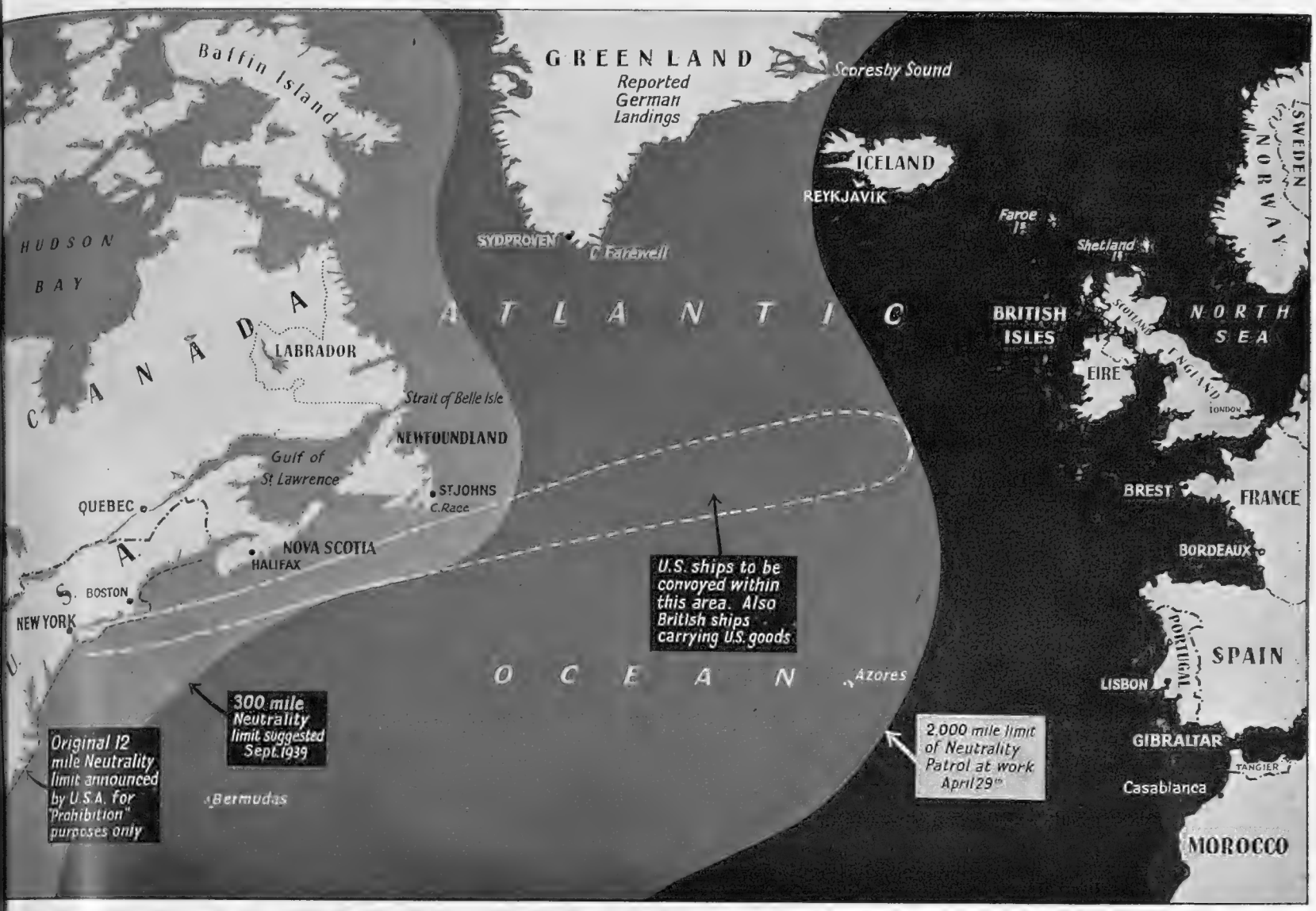
21-4-41. U.S. experts pronounced it within domestic and International Law for U.S. warships to convoy American shipping outside the war zone laid down by the U.S. Government. German right to search such ships, and if carrying contraband to seize them, recognised, but not to sink them by submarine without warning against Hitler's own agreement.

President Roosevelt refused to be drawn into a definite statement.

23-4-41. Mayor La Guardia defined "offshore defence" of British supplies as three hours' flight by plane doing 300 miles per hour.

A NAZI PLANE SHIPPED TO AFRICA: This picture reaches us from a neutral source: it shows the arrival of a Nazi plane at an unnamed African port. Of apparently new design, this Stork has folded wings for easier accommodation on a small aerodrome. No other information is given with the picture. An Italian sailor can be seen on the left, and a native soldier on the right, of the aircraft. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the picture was taken at a Mediterranean port in Italian possession on the North African coast





THE ATLANTIC BATTLE-SCENE, AND THE SCOPE OF THE UNITED STATES NEUTRALITY PATROL: A visual impression of the area which U.S. Naval vessels will now patrol for a distance of 2,000 miles from the American coast

The region of American "neutrality" was at one time confined within a twelve-mile limit along the eastern freeboard of the States: this was in the Prohibition era. At the outbreak of the war, however, a 300-mile Neutrality Zone came into force. This has now been extended to 2,000 miles—to ensure that material coming to this country under the Lease-Lend Act is not sent to the bottom by Nazi U-boats and bombers. Roughly, the area to be patrolled by U.S. vessels and aircraft extends from the western shores of Iceland down to the Azores and farther south

Cordell Hull, Colonel Knox and others prepared public for institution of convoys without definite commitment.

25-4-41. President announced extension of U.S. Neutrality Patrol, and stated that they would operate as far into the Seven Seas as is necessary for the defence of the Western Hemisphere. Spoke of a safety belt as far east as Greenland. Not a convoy system.

President Roosevelt refused to say what Neutrality Patrol was supposed to do if it saw a British convoy attacked.

27-4-41. Reported that the Neutrality Patrol was being increased from 125 ships to over 200 to work nearly half-way across the Atlantic.

27-4-41. Churchill's speech caused strengthening of the American demand to substitute convoys for Neutrality Patrol.

29-4-41. U.S. Navy definitely announced the Neutrality Patrol was already working 2,000 miles out in Atlantic.

29-4-41. President declared that U.S. warships would go into the war zone if necessary for the defence interests of the Western Hemisphere, but not merchantmen.

30-4-41. Colonel Knox, Secretary of the Navy, announced that the whole of the Atlantic Fleet was on Neutrality Patrol, but refused to say how many. Reserves were being called up, principally for naval auxiliaries, armed yachts, etc.

30-4-41. Isolationists' resolutions to prohibit convoys, or, alternatively, to insist on Congressional sanction, tabled.

6-5-41. Mr. Stimson, U.S. Secretary of War, declared that the American Navy must safeguard arms shipments to Britain. He warned Americans that they must be ready for "sacrifice" in the fight for freedom.

On left—

TYPES OF VESSELS OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH MAY BE USED FOR THE ATLANTIC CONVOYS—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

Starting from the left-hand side of this picture, we see the following six vessels of the U.S. Navy, each of which is admirably suited for its own specific duties: the oiler *Cimarron*, launched in January 1939, of 8,000 tons, and with a complement of 64. It has a speed of 18 knots, a radius of 18,000 miles, and a cargo capacity of 6,000,000 gallons; the patrol ship *Charleston*, launched in February 1936, of 2,000 tons. This vessel has four 6-in. guns and others, and a speed of 20 knots; it carries a seaplane on board; in the immediate foreground, a patrol boat of one of the newest type: in background, the destroyer *Ericsson*, one of the very latest type—two-funnelled—which was only laid down in March 1940; she is one of 24 vessels of the *Benson* class: the patrol ship *Eric* (in middle distance), of the same type as the *Charleston*, previously described: the aircraft tender *Wright*, of 8,675 tons—a vessel of a type in which the United States Navy seems to specialise. She has a complement of 311, and can accommodate 12 aircraft for repair: she is fitted as a flagship

THE MEN WHO ARE ATTEMPTING TO BLOCKADE BRITAIN: A picture from Germany, showing a submarine departing for her patrol in Atlantic waters. Obviously intended for propaganda purposes, the German crew look more cheerful than the occasion perhaps warrants—considering the very considerable dangers they are about to face!

THE NEW SUBMARINE CHASERS SETTING OUT ON A PATROL: THEY ARE IN REALITY VERY FAST POCKET DESTROYERS AND CARRY A VERY COMPREHENSIVE ARMAMENT

A LINE OF FAST MOTOR LAUNCHES ENGAGED ON AN ANTI-SUBMARINE PATROL IN THE CHANNEL

FIRING AT A FLOATING MINE WITH A LEWIS GUN: A SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT FEAT IN A CONFINED SPACE AND IN A ROUGH SEA!

OFFICERS ON THE BRIDGE FIRING AT A FLOATING MINE THEY HAVE JUST LOCATED, WITH SERVICE RIFLES

A MOTOR LAUNCH FLAT OUT: A PICTURE WHICH SHOWS THE VESSEL'S GRACEFUL LINES, AND THE COMPACTNESS OF HER EQUIPMENT

THE OFFICERS OF ONE OF THE FAST NEW MOTOR LAUNCHES OF THE ROYAL NAVY ON THE BRIDGE AS THE VESSEL LEAVES PORT FOR PATROL

The M.L.s of the ROYAL NAVY

The New Motor Patrol Vessels Used for Convoy Duties and Against the German E-Boats

Every night, the German E-boats lie in wait in the dark Channel waters, lying low until a convoy comes along. And every night, from bases on the East Coast, Britain's new pocket destroyers—the motor torpedo-boats—go a-hunting in pursuit of these commerce raiders. To ferret out the E-boats the new motor patrols have a powerful sting—in addition to their guns, they are also well stocked with depth-charges for the U-boats engaged on the same errand as the E-boats. The motor-launch submarine-chasers are built in Britain with American parts: they are exceptionally fast and are well armed with quick-firing guns, the latest type of anti-aircraft gun (called by the crew "a work of art") and machine guns, in addition to the depth-charges. They are the most seaworthy craft of their size afloat to-day; many of them have already been in action against the German E-boats. They each carry a small but highly-trained crew. During the day they are engaged on the task of combating floating mines: when located these are sunk by rifle- or machine-gun fire in the manner shown in our pictures

IN THE KIRKUK OIL-FIELD IN NORTHERN IRAQ—"THE LAND OF EVERLASTING FIRE": This extraordinary picture shows jets of fire breaking through the ground in a part of the oil-fields known to the natives as "Jehannum," the Arabic name for the Gehenna of the Bible. These fires which, of course, indicate the presence of oil very close to the surface, have been burning at this spot from time immemorial. The "fiery furnace" is about one acre in extent

THE PROBLEM OF IRAQ AND ITS OIL SUPPLIES

A Description of the Country and of Its Vast and Rich Stores, Which has Caused the New State of Iraq to Become One of the Centres of War—*A Special "Sphere" Section*

Illustrated with Exclusive Pictures and Described by Experts

KIRKUK, the jumping-off place for the Iraq oil-fields, lies some 200 miles to the north of Bagdad by rail. Since the opening-up of the fields it has developed tremendously, and is to-day a busy centre. Kirkuk, however, is very different from the cities of the plain passed on the way up from Bagdad. The country gradually changes from the dried-up desert to the hills of the north. The snowy mountains of Kurdistan form a wonderful background. The trees change from date-palm to olive, from olive to wild oak.

The people are even a greater contrast. Instead of white-robed Arabs, there are Kurds with lean, fierce features, wearing pale blue short coats, and shirts with very long sleeves, tied up in knots; only let loose when worshipping at the mosque. Deep thick belts, holding miniature arsenals!

Kirkuk is an ancient city built, as all cities in Iraq, on a mound composed of the buried débris of town upon town. Some suppose it to be Arrapha, Ararat of the Bible, the place where the Ark rested. The town is divided by the bed of a winter torrent spanned by an arched bridge, one side being the modern town containing the serai, banks, business houses and schools, and the other the older living quarters. Among the sights of the city is a mosque to the Prophet Daniel, whose graceful minaret is a landmark for miles.

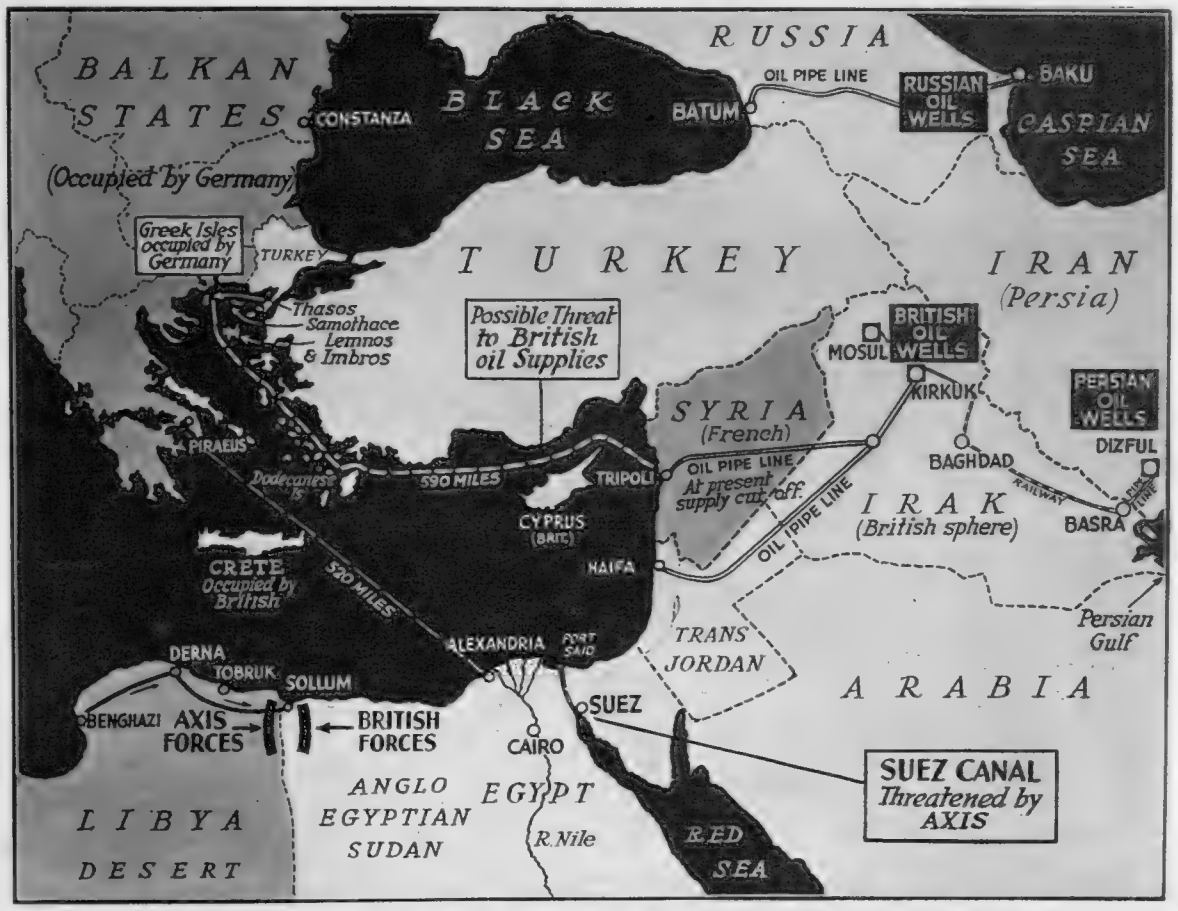
The oil-fields lie some five miles from the town in open, hilly country. Here is a modern little settlement of some fifty British and American engineers with their wives and families. The Iraq Petroleum Company, which controls the fields, is an international concern, comprising British, French and American interests, under the direction of a British chairman. Great Britain is the most prominent partner. It was in October 1927 that a small party of oil engineers visited the region and made an experimental boring. Oil was struck and the Iraq oil-fields to-day are among the richest of fields. At the end of 1937 there were 32 serviceable wells, each of which is capable of yielding from 1,300 to 2,000 tons of oil daily.

The region is bituminous. It was here, tradition says, that the three friends of Daniel—Shadrech, Meshach and Abednego—were cast into the "fiery furnace." There is a field, about an acre in extent, called Jehannum by the natives—the name being Arabic for Gehenna, which means the place of eternal fires. It bears this name because of the jets of fire which issue from the ground and which have been burning from time immemorial.

From the fields in Northern Iraq the oil is pumped through pipe-lines to Haifa, in Palestine, and to Tripoli, in Syria. For the first 156 miles, from Kirkuk to Haditha, on the Euphrates, the two sections of the line run together. At Haditha they separate. The southern one continues through Iraq, Transjordania and Palestine to Haifa, and the northern one through Syria to Tripoli. The length of the Haifa pipe-line is 620 miles and that to Tripoli 530 miles. The laying of this pipe-line across the desert and the erection of a dozen pumping stations in connection with them called for the services of an army of 12,000 men and demanded an expenditure of £10,000,000.

By agreement, France is entitled to one-fourth of the Iraq oil, but since her defection the Tripoli pipe-line has been shut down. The capacity of the pipe-line is 4,000,000 tons of oil a year.

H. J. Shepstone



THE POSITION OF IRAQ AND ITS OIL-FIELDS IN RELATION TO TURKEY, SYRIA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN: The British approach to Iraq is, of course, from the south-east by way of Basra—although the oil from the Kirkuk and Mosul oil-fields finds its exit by pipe-line to the south-west and Haifa. If Germany is to come to the help of the usurper, Rashid Ali, it must be by way of Turkey or Syria—and in both cases long distances are involved. So far as Turkey is concerned, a hostile Iraq means that her rear is menaced, which would be a serious thing for the Turks. It will be noticed that, in addition to the Kirkuk and Mosul oil-fields, there is another—the Iranian oil-field of Dizful—the product of which is piped to Basra at the head of the Persian Gulf. This oil-field is so far unaffected by the war

THE OIL WELLS OF KIRKUK AND MOSUL

Described by A. BEEBY THOMPSON

IRAQ is permeated with historical associations dating back from Assyrian and Babylonian days when great cities like Nineveh (Mosul), Nimrina, Babylon, Ur, and a host of others acquired world-wide fame for their magnificence and opulence. Overrun and ruled in turn by Greeks, Persians, Romans and Turks, the vicissitudes and trials of the population have been enormous. For over 5,000 years Iraq has been the battle-ground of conflicting powers, all striving to control the road between the East and the West. Nor has the struggle ceased, although the main objects of thrusts may have changed from purely strategic causes since the advent of sea and air travel and the building of the Suez Canal; petroleum is now the attraction, for in Arabia and Persia occur the most wonderful oil resources ever known.

The occupation by the Axis Powers of Greece and certain of the Ægean Islands commanding approaches to the Dardanelles, after our reliant but inadequate force was overwhelmed by superior numbers, exposes the Arabian oil-fields, unproven in the last Great War, to graver dangers than were thought possible a short time ago. Without effective aid from Britain, Turkey would be quite unable to resist for long any serious pressure by German troops, but so long as Britain controls the sea, any operations in force against Iraq would involve complicated arrangements which, if premeditated, have probably been much upset by the heavy losses sustained in their recent advance.

The Anatolian railways cross difficult mountainous country before they reach the Mesopotamian plains, and they are certainly ill-equipped to carry large quantities of men and munitions, besides presenting a good target for attack by planes. Should an invasion be attempted from Beyrout, there would be available an excellent tarred road across the Lebanon Mountains as far as Damascus, as well as a narrow-gauge railway almost useless for rapid or heavy transport and rarely used by passengers since auto-cars were introduced. This route would be exposed to air attack from Palestine. These beautiful hills, with their pleasant

(Continued on following page)

The OIL WELLS of KIRKUK and MOSUL (cont.)

THE TOWN OF KIRKUK: A GENERAL VIEW SHOWING THE ANCIENT BRIDGE OVER THE WINTER TORRENT: This is the centre of the oil-field district; and it combines the very modern and the very ancient in its architecture. In summer, the wide torrent vanishes, and the bridge spans the pebbly and empty river-bed

PART OF THE WALLED CITADEL OF KIRKUK: The town is very ancient, and it possesses a mosque said to contain the Tomb of Daniel. The seepages of oil near the town and the issues of inflammable gas have been known for thousands of years and recorded by many historians

THE FAMOUS BRIDGE OVER THE TIGRIS AT MOSUL: Until recently this bridge filled the gap between the remains of the ancient masonry bridge which once joined the city with Nineveh. A small toll was levied on all travellers, animals and vehicles which passed. The roadway was floated on boats anchored in the stream; but now a modern steel bridge has been built by British engineers to replace this crude construction

A VIEW OF THE "ANTICLINAL" FOLDS IN THE MOSUL DISTRICT WHERE OIL PROSPECTING HAS BEEN IN PROGRESS: Only a little short verbiage appears in the cool winter months when there is some rainfall. At other times the land is bare and stony

(Continued from preceding page)

summer temperature, are dotted with villas where the opulent reside in the summer. From Beyrout to Mosul is about 500 miles. As neither the Euphrates nor the Tigris is navigable in their upper reaches, except for small craft at certain seasons, little use could be made of river transport for men or stores.

The main enemy objective would naturally be Mosul and the rich Kirkuk oil-field with control over the pipe-line to Tripoli, but it is scarcely likely that this would be left unprotected, especially that part in Palestine and Iraq which comes under British protection. In any case, the destruction of the pump stations would shut off supplies for a long time.

The oil wells themselves are very susceptible to injury, as they are all of the flowing type under pressure control which, if relaxed and the oil fired, would lead not only to terrible conflagrations but enormous losses of oil. Their extinction and control would not be an easy matter. However, with the arrival of sufficient suitably-equipped troops in Basra and full use of the great air base established near Ramadi on the Euphrates, an advancing enemy force would be met under favourable conditions for the defenders long before they reached the oil-field regions.

So long as Basra is securely held and Iran remains friendly or neutral, ample supplies of oil will always be available in Iran, but should pressure be exerted on Iran by the Axis or Russia to withhold our requirements, and Britain was unable and unwilling to enforce deliveries, there are still available other important sources of supply in the Persian Gulf. During the last few years a very prolific oil-field has been developed on Bahrein Island of pearl fame by a subsidiary of the Standard Oil of California, and a modern refinery has been built to deal with an output of about 1,000,000 tons a year. Already Imperial troops have, it is reported, been landed to protect the island, which is ruled by an independent sheikh friendlily disposed towards the Axis Powers. Other important oil-fields have also been discovered on the adjoining mainland in Saudi Arabia, and these are giving an output of about 600,000 tons a year, although capable of great expansion if necessary. A little further north, near the Iraqian frontier, oil has also been proved at Kuwait, in territory also ruled by a friendly sheikh under British protection. There are, therefore, very useful supplies of oil in British hands so long as sea control is maintained.

Once the Lebanon ranges of Syria in the west or the mountains of Kurdistan to the north are crossed, neither the Syrian desert nor the Mesopotamian plains present any topographical obstructions to movements, but scarcity of water is the main difficulty away from the two major rivers.

A RUGGED OUTCROP OF GYPSUM MARKING THE CREST OF A FOLD IN THE MOSUL DISTRICT WHERE OIL HAS BEEN DISCOVERED

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE STATION AT HABBANIYA: This picture was taken from the high ground from which the station was attacked. After a six-days siege, Rashid Ali was forced back towards Bagdad

THE COURSE OF THE PIPE-LINE FROM THE KIRKUK OIL-FIELDS ACROSS THE JORDAN VALLEY TO HAIFA ON THE MEDITERRANEAN

Jebel Sinjar, the home of the Yezides, the Devil Worshippers, is an isolated massif rising abruptly and majestically from the plains some distance due west of Mosul, but elsewhere the succession of low ridges running in a general north-west to south-east direction in the Mosul region denote the anticlines upon which oil prospects mainly lie. To the north and east, the frontiers of Turkey and Iran are marked by high ranges inhabited by Kurds, and in the winter months they are deeply enveloped in snow, presenting an attractive background from Mosul and the plains. Whereas the plains become parched and dry as the summer advances and grazing for herds becomes more and more scarce, the hills retain their verdure and form a delightful retreat for overworked officials from the heat of the plains.

Kirkuk and Erbil, at the two ends of the oil-field, are walled cities with considerable historic associations, retaining much of their old-world charm with narrow, winding streets lined by dark passages converging into compounds where family life proceeds in secrecy. Artisans skilled in all manner of native crafts follow their trades in the doorways of tiny rooms in full view of spectators.

Only a short distance outside Kirkuk are the perpetual fires where seeping oil and escaping gases have since time immemorial marked the crest maximum of an elongated dome which has since proved to be one of the largest and richest oil-fields in the world. The first well sunk near these manifestations struck oil rather unexpectedly at a shallow depth, with the result that before control could be effected, many hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil had been lost. At one time, before control was effected, the well was erupting 100,000 barrels a day, a great sight for the Kirkuk inhabitants. On the outskirts of Kirkuk have been erected a township of modern dwellings for the oil-field staff and operatives, in addition to workshops, power plants, gas-stripping installations and other works.

The Iranian oil-fields lie about 150 miles north-east of Basra, and the oil is conveyed by pipe-line to Abadan, where one of the largest and most up-to-date refineries in the world is located to deal with the output. Normal production exceeds 10,000,000 tons a year, most of which finds its way to Europe in the form of crude or refined products; but shipping facilities and markets alone fix the limits of production, as the potentialities of the fields are enormous. The two major oil-fields in Iran are the Masjid-i-Sulaiman and Neft Keld, where all the wells flow naturally under pressures controlled and regulated to ensure the economic development of the fields.

Vast areas of flat alluvial plains stretching for nearly 400 miles from above Bagdad to Basra constitute one of the most wonderful granaries in the world. Relics of past irrigation projects are everywhere evidenced by banks of silt cleaned from canals long since abandoned and neglected. Ambitious and costly schemes for regulating and utilising the Tigris and Euphrates waters are in course of construction or in preparation, and one entertains the utilisation of the Great Habbaniya depression for the storage and later release of Euphrates flood-waters for irrigating lands further downstream.

THE FAMOUS RUTBAH WELLS IN THE DESERT NEAR THE SYRIAN FRONTIER: This is a pumping station seventy miles within the Iraq borders; Iraqi troops had seized the post, but later they were forced to surrender to a British patrol, and a number of families who had been captured by the Iraqis were then released

BASRA, WHERE BRITISH TROOPS WERE LANDED FOR THE OPERATIONS IN IRAQ: During the last war, this town on the Shatt-el-Arab was the base for our operations in Mesopotamia: it is once again our base—this time for the operations against Rashid Ali. The aircraft in this picture is a Blenheim bomber

The OIL WELLS of KIRKUK and MOSUL

(cont.)

WELDING A JOINT BY ELECTRICAL ARC: The rush shelter has been erected by the native workmen as a protection against the wind. In the distance is one of the rock outcrops along which evidences of oil are found

BURNING THE OIL AND GAS FLOWING FROM A GUSHING OIL WELL IN COURSE OF TESTING: Before provision is made for the delivery of the oil to tanks in the Iraq oilfields, the wells are blown in and tested for production. At this stage it is usual for the engineers to ignite the product as a safety measure. High columns of smoke then convey to the Arabs of the region the welcome news of a new strike of oil

A DITCHING MACHINE AT WORK IN THE DESERT: This is capable of digging a trench in flat country 6 ft. deep and 2 ft. wide at the rate of a mile a day. The pipes through which the oil will flow are then laid within the ditch and covered over with earth

A TRACTOR CRANE SWINGS THE PIPES INTO PLACE: First these pipes are laid across the desert, then the ditch for their reception is dug by the ditching machine. After the pipes have been welded by electricity they are then lowered into the ditch

THE OIL HAS TO BE BROUGHT SOME HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM THE OIL FIELD TO THE PORT OF SHIPMENT ON THE MEDITERRANEAN. Here Completed Sections of the Line are being Lowered into the Ditch

THE SLENDER PIPES BEARING THE PRECIOUS OIL RUN ACROSS THE SANDS OF THE DESERT, OVER ROCKY STRETCHES AND THROUGH CLEFTS IN THE MOUNTAINS. Along Most of the Route the Pipe-line is Protected by Patrols

HITLER'S BID FOR SYRIA

By FERDINAND TUOHY

WHAT sharply occupies us at the moment with regard to Syria is whether Germany will use its landing-grounds and harbours for pushing by air to reinforce Rashid in Iraq. We may get further warning in the shape of an intermediate move on Cyprus, which lies roughly 300 miles from Italian air-fields on Rhodes, and 150 miles from those near Damascus. As this war leaps rather than goes forward, it may have done some more leaping before this article appears. But the condition Syria has got into, together with what may be in store for it, and for us, as a consequence, has meantime taken a place near the top in the general war situation. If we have to keep glancing in all directions with Hitler—watch Gibraltar, watch the Ukraine, watch Iceland—our time will decidedly not be wasted in glancing at Syria.

The first thing that emerges is the slipping to near extinction point of France's authority as Mandatory Power.

Secondly, it is no less clear that the Arabs won't have the Italians at any price.

Thirdly, the Germans have taken over the running locally from their discredited partners, and they mean to take over the country if they can.

And, fourthly, the Syrians themselves alternate between pro-British and pro-German sentiments according to the fluctuations of the war; but all the time they are out for what they missed after the last war—independence—and it must be admitted that the way the cards are stacked at present, they look more like listening to German trickery than waiting in hope of Britain asserting herself.

Thanks to Hitler's devilishly clever policy of rotting France's Mediterranean administrations instead of doing violence to them, Germany is able to press strongly in Syria while we remain lined up in Palestine, barred from preventive action lest by so doing we should play into Darlan's hands and find ourselves at war with France. Not the least reason this has to be avoided concerns the effect it could produce in North America, where ties with France remain strong. Let us hope, though, that friends in Quebec and the United States realise to the full how France's behaviour in the whole Mediterranean basin has grievously shackled us and immeasurably stiffened our task.

It would have been better for us if the Italians, who had clamoured for Syria for years, had gone in there after the capitulation of France, as everyone expected them to do. Mark how Hitler used the French instead of the Italians to garrison Syria until he should be ready to go there himself. Pretty nimble work. He knew we'd hold off the French. One of his biggest ideas is to get at us through the French possessions without stirring these to violent action of any kind. His doing so disintegrates these territories, as De Gaulle has seen. But the Men of Vichy pretend they don't see it, or act that way. They affect faith in a finally conquering Hitler smiling on France's African dominion "save for local adjustments," such liberality to spring from the pushing of Britain-in-Africa well below the Equator, enabling the Axis to take its fill. I say "affect" because we shouldn't forget that there has long existed a firm French school against "Empire" altogether. Better concentrate on a strong domestic or "metropolitan" France. Clemenceau thought that way with modifications, and used to argue that France had been strongest and happiest before she acquired "Empire," which she only did in its present form in the last sixty years, the original idea of pioneer Jules Ferry having been to lead the French away from morbid introspection over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine.

If Syria is now practically being given away, there 's the additional fact that it was very much France's first colonial dream. France coveted Syria ever since she established a short-lived kingdom there after leading the Crusades. This claim was actually submitted at Versailles, when Feisal tickled an agnostic Clemenceau by mildly inquiring, "But, pardon me, which of us won the Crusades?"

From time immemorial, Syria's great troubles and misfortunes have arisen from her being a country "of many men not a nation." Her 2,500,000 inhabitants, covering a huge area, are composed of a dozen different races, mainly Asiatic, and, worse, of thirty religious sects, all "hating one another for the love of God," or, at any rate, showing permanent jealousy and suspicion. The French post-war way of barging in on this was to nurse the half-million Christians inside a newly-formed "Great Lebanon" Republic, enjoying the more temperate and fertile coastal regions, while the Arabs were to be pressed back into *their* State in the stifling interior, with Damascus as hub.

But even this Arab independence never materialised, and that accounts for Arab scowls or contempt to-day when General Dentz promises it again under French protection for after the war. There are other reasons for Syrian enmity. The years 1920-26 were a tussle between French ambitions and Arab aspirations. The French sat heavily on the Arab Movement, and a long tale of violence had its highlights in the bloody Druse rebellion and in bombardments of Damascus. Economically, the French saw their exploitations undone by the weakness of the franc, which got them no popularity. Theirs, furthermore, was often an inefficient, corrupt and psychologically unsuited administration; boorish and arrogant, and with a police supervision bordering on the tyrannical. Essentially, the French sought to keep the politically-conscious Syrians down to the same level of "emancipation" as Moors, Algerians and Tunisians.

In these first years, Generals Gouraud, Weygand and Sarrail successively ruled as dictators and by martial law; a period later labelled the era of "blindness, folly and waste." From 1926 to 1933 Governor Ponsot, a civilian, improved all sorts of things that were wrong about the administration, and sought sincerely to fix things with the Arabs. But it was left to his successor, de Martel, to come nearest to success. This tried diplomat suddenly saw the only way to win an Arab was to show honest respect for him and his feelings. De Martel modelled a Treaty on Britain-Iraq lines; and Syria and Lebanon were to be admitted to the League as sovereign independent states. It seemed that a Franco-Syrian honeymoon lay ahead. But, firstly, political chaos in Paris, and, secondly, the war, gave the Quai D'Orsay excuses for never implementing the designated reforms. In 1939 Daladier announced a continuance of the Mandate, and withheld autonomy owing to "strategic necessity."

Next intervened the French Collapse. That was a sad and sorry business in Syria. Up to June 1940 vast stores, munitions and a considerable air force were being piled up in Syria. Not until June 28 did General Mittelhauser agree to Vichy's surrender order. Weygand had to fly specially to Beyrout. It was, of course, a surrender even if the Tricolour still flew—or fluttered sadly. Especially angered were the younger French officers, and many of the older ones, who had settled in Syria with their families. The cave-in speedily demoralised the rank and file. Yet before that happened there was a hope. Two of the principal French officers, General Catroux and Colonel de Larminat, chief of staff, came out for De Gaulle and left for Palestine. So did the Polish Brigade. And so did many small groups. But Vichy reacted to this show of spirit by sending out hundreds of officers and officials to take over, men bearing the common Vichy imprint of impotence, appeasing and hostility to England And under this pretty company an Italian Armistice Commission got to work: its intention, to collect all vital French supplies, and particularly, the air force.

This happened before Wavell and the Greeks licked the Italians; and at Axis command Vichy appointed as Governor the vile little Corsican Chiappe, a Fascist, German-helping, corrupt, "Staviskied" ex-chief of Paris police who did more fatal harm to France than whole colonies of her "Reds." When Chiappe was shot down near Tunis, Laval's Vichy screamed that the R.A.F. had done it. I wish they had, but it was the Italians, though Vichy, of course, never retracted when the Italians eventually admitted their lapse. However, a General Dentz was sent in substitute, an Alsatian whose only claim to attention had concerned his being left behind to let the Germans into Paris. And Dentz is there in Syria still, bleating "Obey Pétain!", having purged the army of De Gaullists, and promising the Arabs independence some day.

The Nazi infiltration steadily gains Arab support by promising a realisation of the Pan-Arab ideal. The many hundred Nazis are of the kind to seize key points and air-fields, with native assistance, coincident with any coming of the *Luftwaffe*—that is should Dentz show opposition.

The Nazis have got their special armoury working full tilt: one German alone, Baron von Hentig, has reported back to Berlin that he has gained the backing of the Shamman tribesmen, who number half a million, largely in Syria. A second baron, Von Oppenheim, has got his hands on the oil situation while working as archæologist.

The Germans only want French "Yes-Men" around, who respond at once to orders. One gains the impression that if they do try to take over Syria all that will come from Vichy will be a Pétain protest. In this respect there was an eloquent move by Darlan when he left the League. That nullifies the French Mandate in Syria, according to present political morality, so why should not France pass the territory over to Germany if she feels that way inclined? Another eloquent occurrence was Hitler's ready lavishness in giving the beaten Italians Slovenia and leaving them in occupation of the Dalmatia they covet. Perhaps in return Mussolini has undertaken to forget about Syria. Once again: The Italians can certainly be ruled out as regards Syria. As for ourselves, and the Turks, whom the Germans are jollying along, both of us have said we 'd take action if foreign troops entered Syria. That was said in July last.

A KURDISH COMPANY OF THE IRAQ LEVIES: It was men of this type, natives of Iraq, who accompanied the British forces and collaborated with them in their attack on Rashid Ali's troops at Habanniya aerodrome. These men have thus demonstrated in convincing manner their loyalty to Britain

THE IRAQ USURPER, RASHID ALI, who is reported to have received a large sum from Berlin as his share for having engineered the Revolution and anti-British actions in Iraq

DAMASCUS, CAPITAL OF SYRIA: This is the canal which pierces the town and conveys the flood waters of the several rivers reaching the plains near Damascus to the areas where irrigation is practised. The road to Beyrout runs to the right

OTHER THINGS THAN WAR . . .

Of J.M.B.: And of the Luckiest Craftsmen Generally: With a Note on Our Private Vaticans

J.M.B.—It is always a question whether the most exhaustive and admirable biography of a well-known public figure, written after his death but during the lifetime of his contemporaries, can ever tell one anything essential of his character which the public do not already know. The general public is the valet of an eminent man. If that man has faults, the public know all about them, even if he be the hero of many of them.

Mr. Mackail's 700-page biography of J. M. Barrie does not appear to me to tell us more about Barrie's character and contradictions, his failings and good points, than between us we knew already, but it does explode "the mystery of J.M.B." There was no mystery. Or, rather, the only mystery about Barrie was how in the world with his moderate genius he succeeded in persuading the fairies and fountains of honour to crown him with material bays beyond anything ever showered on a giant of literature, let alone on an author who never wrote an outstanding book, and whose plays were more remarkable for box-office acumen and stage-sense than for any permanent merit in dramatic art.

Barrie had an enormous following of fans. The fairies were all on his side, because he was their publicity agent. He had the children and the mothers and aunts and nurses with him "to a man." He could never be discounted during his lifetime. But to call him a literary giant—as he wished and expected to be called—was an act of recklessness and faulty judgment which many accomplished (and most of them regretted) while he yet lived. It is difficult to deny that Mr. Mackail makes it clear that the popular notion of Barrie as a shy, unworldly, impish, sad, sentimental, gentle little man of genius was moonshine. He paints for us the portrait of a man strong, greedy, and even juggernaut in his insatiable ambition and vanity; a snob; a showman of incredible adroitness; a man constantly acting a part, the "hermit," the "patient sufferer," the invalid, the dreamer, the child-at-heart. And all these parts he played for box-office or personal showmanship—for the fame he craved and knew he did not merit. Well, then, if Mr. Mackail has slashed the popular canvas and replaced it with a hard, crude, realistic portrait, his book surely *has* told us for the first time *everything* essential, hitherto unknown to the public. But the crux lies in that easy phrase, "popular estimate."

Barrie's Public.—Barrie's public were the "nursemaids" in every department and sphere of human activity, from the nursemaids of the popular Press and popular literary criticism, to the nursemaids of the drawing-room and nursery wing.

There was nothing new to tell of Barrie to that public which are capable of critical and logical thought, even in a small degree. That public recognised and approved his good qualities, his generosity and power to love and be loyal, his good abilities in his restricted field, his moral quality. But they never handed him an Order of Merit either for his unworldliness or for his literary genius. The mystery of J.M.B. was his luck in "getting away with it" for so long. He was lucky in a public of which so vast a proportion never thinks, never reasons, and is content to hold on to the apron-strings of nursery-maids.

But there—perhaps I am prejudiced. Barrie in his lifetime bored me more than any writer living or dead, and his speeches and whimsicalities and shows and shams obscured in my judgment all the respect due to his qualities.

His career and recognition stand in my mind as a living reproach to the literary judgment and literary taste of his age and of those whose trust it is, or should be, to recognise merit where it exists. Which is not to deny to him many gifts of friendship and good qualities which endeared him to his friends—generosity and the power of practical sympathy among the first. Indeed, those whom he loved best had good reason to love him dearly.

The Fortunate Craftsman.—Of all the craftsmen of the arts, the literary is the most fortunate. For him fortune smiles from every department. Your painter is a lucky fellow. Three or four centuries after his death Posterity will stand in wonder and admiration before "The Night Watch," by Rembrandt, or "A View of Delft," by Vermeer.

Your architect, too, may keep his personal memory green in his greatest works for centuries after his death. The lesser craftsman in stone and iron and wood enjoys the supreme benefit during his life of pursuing a craft which is also his hobby—"working with his hands the thing which is good."

These benefits the singer and actor enjoy in more turbulent, uneasy, less contented form during their lives. But twenty years after their deaths their work is nothing but a memory derived from contemporary writings. Except from the modern gramophone record or the unsatisfying old film, they and their art have vanished beyond recall.

It is so, too, with the orator and the wit—and worse. For *reading* their fireworks can do them nothing but disservice, since oratory and wit belong strictly to their hour and to their unrecapturable atmosphere.

But for the literary craftsman—the poet, novelist, historian, biographer—every gift of fortune is reserved. A good book never dies. The man who wrote it lives personally in the consciousness of posterity all down the generations in which it is read. His book may wax and wane in fashion, but its light is never put out. It flames up again to meet a need of the age and it and the author come forth again as good as new. And if that gift of fortune were not enough, the material good-fairy also attends the author's christening. For a whole generation after his death his family and heirs may reap financial benefit from the sales of his books.

How lucky (and how little they appreciated their luck) the craftsmen of the pen! How little could Shakespeare; Defoe, Jane Austen, Henry Kingsley, Emily Eden, R. D. Blackmore, men and women chosen at random, and of such diverse degrees of importance, have imagined the immortality which was to be theirs!

A good book never dies, and therefore its author enjoys personal immortality.

Our Vaticans.—In old days I used to think with sympathy of the Pope, confined for the whole course of his pontificate within the walls of the Vatican. I forget the precise acreage of the Vatican, with its railway station and roads and walks, but I believe it is little bigger than my own small area of woodland and cultivated or semi-cultivated, ground. I used to wonder how he managed to vary his rounds so that his alternative itineraries could preserve some measure of freshness, if not of surprise. It seemed a problem, and it led me to suppose that it was not his territorial domain, but the domain of his mind which afforded the relief, the change and the recreation that every man needs. The philosophic mind is an Empire containing unplumbed depths of treasure and raw material for a lifetime of fashioning into useful things. To-day, many of us are confined to our Vaticans, and those who are free to go away are restricted to the narrowest limits. Is it wisest to employ a few spare days in your own house, while another performs your duty? Assuredly it depends on your mind. If the power of detachment is yours, it *is* better so. But you must be alone in your home. Your family will never suffer you to keep off war topics; your neighbours will still come in on their war occasions unless you are living "incog." and alone behind drawn blinds, like the poorer members of the Dutch aristocracy, who used to lead an anonymous existence at The Hague, when the richer fashionables were holidaying at the Spas of Europe. A neighbouring Vicar asked for terms from an hotel about eight miles from his cure of souls, situated in a once pretty but now suburbanised beauty spot. The terms were so outrageous that he dropped the plan. Be the terms reasonable or no, I think the plan a bad compromise. If you can't get right away, it is best to remain at home and travel by the railroad and by-paths of your mind. I can conceive it possible that a rather deaf man who plugged his ears, smashed his wireless, counter-ordered his newspaper and lived for a fortnight as a hermit, occupying his spare time in writing a book requiring research, might forget that there was a war on, if he lived in one of the least warlike counties of Britain.

J. G.

SEVENTEEN DAYS UNDER THE DEBRIS: That has been the experience of Peggy, the dog seen above. Some time ago, Peggy's owner, Mrs. M. Ablett, left her home in South London to visit friends. There was a raid that night and her home suffered a direct hit. Peggy was given up as lost, but seventeen days later the demolition workers heard a faint yelp and found her pinned beneath a heap of rubbish, very weak but still alive

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME! Though his house is no more, he still has his favourite chair from which he surveys the wreckage with an eloquent expression of canine disapproval. This picture was taken after a recent raid on Plymouth

KEEPING THE PIGEONS DRY: Homing pigeons used in rescue work by the R.A.F. are now being carried in a new type of container designed to be watertight and buoyant. The idea is to keep the pigeons warm and dry in the event of the aircraft making a forced landing in the sea. As pigeons cannot home by night, a forced descent on the water necessitates waiting till dawn before the pigeons can be released during which time they must be kept fit for their long journey to the base. Wet gives a pigeon cold feet, and worse, may cause its death

". . But the PILOT is SAFE . ."

These Pictures Show why this Statement in Air Ministry Communiques can be Made so Often

THE MESSAGE CONCERNING AN AIRMAN IS RECEIVED AT AN R.A.F. STATION : The warrant officer will then pass the message on to a waiting launch. Note the "Red" warning card, showing that an enemy raid is in progress

AT THE LAUNCH THE CAPTAIN GETS HIS MESSAGE FROM THE SHORE BASE : On the left is the coxswain who handles the launch on its 50 m.p.h. race. A gunner will stand in the circular platform, his head through a turret

WITH HIS COXSWAIN IN THE WARDROOM THE CAPTAIN PLANS A COURSE : He takes account of the wind which may have blown the descending pilot in a given direction ; and of currents which may have carried his floating body in another direction

EXACTLY TEN MINUTES BEFORE THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN THE CREW OF THIS HIGH-SPEED LAUNCH HAD SEEN THE PILOT BALE OUT OF A SMOKING "HURRICANE" ABOVE THE CHANNEL. THEY REACHED HIM ALMOST AS SOON AS HE HIT THE WATER

HERE YOU SEE THE RESCUE NET IN ACTION : An unconscious man in soaked clothing lies heavy in the water, and three or four of the crew can get on to the broad net and bring their joint lifting strength to bear, whereas only one or two can get on to the usual rope ladder. They try to avoid using ropes to get a man out of the water in case he may have been wounded or have internal injuries

THIS IS THE CAPTAIN OF AN R.A.F. HIGH-SPEED LAUNCH OPERATING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE AIR SEA-RESCUE SERVICE : His rank is that of a Flying officer of the R.A.F., but he also holds a Master Mariner's ticket in the Merchant Service. He knows the sea and its currents and winds

"FROM all these flights, only one of our aircraft is missing, but the pilot is safe." One often reads these words, but how many realise how this has been achieved ? Here we show pictures illustrating the rescue of an airman forced down over the sea.

It was recently announced that the Air Ministry had formed a new department called the Air Sea-Rescue Service, which is jointly operated by the R.A.F. and Royal Navy. All police stations throughout the country are included in the scheme : they are in special communication with R.A.F. stations and naval bases, so that if a person sees a parachute or aircraft descending and informs the police a message can be flashed to the fast R.A.F. launches which are always at the "ready" in almost every bay and harbour around Britain. It is often only a matter of seconds between the receipt of the information and the dispatch of rescue craft. The high-speed launches carry a crew of ten and can do up to 45 knots. All the deck surfaces are painted yellow, of the same shade as the "Mae Wests" of the R.A.F. and the almost similar life-saving jackets of the *Luftwaffe*. German pilots are now beginning to respect our rescue launches and leave them alone. Nevertheless, our launches carry gunners fore and aft in case the Germans try to be nasty !

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

BOOKS for the STORY-LOVER

Somerset Maugham's New Tale; The Golden Wall Street Touch; A Novel of Suffolk and New England; Neil Gunn's "Silver Darlings"

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM, having vowed to write no more, has just published a new book, UP AT THE VILLA (Heinemann. 6s.). It is too short to be called a novel, and too long to be a short story; in other words, it is the kind of book which publishers are supposed to dislike, although I never know why. In recent years several books of this length have enjoyed the widest popularity. *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* was one of them.

In this kind of story Mr. Maugham is apt to give of his best, and *Up at the Villa* is no exception. Briefly, it is the story of a woman who, recovering from an unhappy marriage, finds herself in the solitary but temporary possession of a charming and luxurious villa above Florence.

PHILIP HUGHES, whose new novel, *Ragged Robin* (Collins. 8s.), has just been published. This is his eighth novel, his previous successes including *Wild Honey, Adventure in Mayfair* and *Together*

A devoted admirer, many years older than herself, turns up to propose marriage. He could offer her comfort, position and a very deep affection. With her mind very nearly made up to accept him, she meets at a dinner-party in Florence an unabashed scamp; a man whose attentions to all women were on a strictly dishonourable basis, and who in his time had enjoyed plenty of success on that basis. Returning from that dinner-party, she tells Mr. Rowley Flint exactly where he gets off, but on her way back to the villa a strange adventure happens to her, and she finds herself in immediate trouble and considerable danger.

To this happening, her devoted friend, Sir Edgar Swift, and her casual acquaintance, Mr. Rowley Flint, react in a manner that leaves Mary Panton no alternative. Her choice is not perhaps so unexpected as startling in its motives.

In no story that he has written has Mr. Maugham's gifts been better deployed. With shrewd, economical strokes he brings these characters to life, hints at drama, produces it with a startling effect, and places the whole thing in a delicious Tuscan setting. Perhaps only Mr. Maugham could get away with a sentence like "A lot of water has flown under the bridges since then." Or maybe it was a matter of proof-reading.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH, by Stephen Longstreet (Gollancz. 8s.), is the story of Mike Seabrook, of the firm of Ott. Seabrook and Owen, Brokers, members of the New York Stock Exchange. Mike Seabrook was the son of a farmer who preferred to take his large bulk and larger energy into the financial jungle known as Wall Street, there to fight and batter his way to the top by beating the tough guys at their own game and by playing the suckers to the limit.

He had two women in his life: his mother, who apparently was the only human being who was not afraid of him, and his partner's wife, Leda, who was the only woman of whom he was afraid.

Mr. Longstreet writes with what seems to be a very sure knowledge of the goings on inside a big financial house in Wall Street. Ticker tapes, margin boards, telephones which command the attention of London, Paris, Istanbul, Vienna and any other place on the earth at a moment's notice; holding companies, covered assets, corrupt lawyers, smooth Greeks, impeccably dressed Englishmen, Jewish commodity speculators, drunken journalists, fantastic parties, moored yachts with no engines, doped debutantes—all done to the accompaniment of interminable drinks in amazing quantities, make up the background.

As the first mutterings of the European war are heard, and finally boil up, the Street goes crazier and crazier. Speculators are roaring at each other and threatening all sorts of people over long-distance wires, Mike Seabrook gets further and further into the thick of it all. Sooner or later he gets caught, having ruined a devoted stooge on the way; been the cause of the death in tragic circumstances of the partner with whose wife he is in love, and having in turn been chiselled by a few other unscrupulous characters.

F. Scott Fitzgerald knew how to do this sort of thing in the roaring '20's, and it is in every sense a compliment to Mr. Longstreet that this fast-moving and at times wildly exciting tale should be comparable to that master's work. On one or two points of detail he is perhaps a little careless. Well-groomed Englishmen, for instance, are not in the habit of wearing waxed moustaches, nor are English Cabinet Ministers liable to shoot grouse, read Horace, play golf or place a bet at Epsom Downs in the same week-end

The migration of the Puritans to the New World in the first half of the seventeenth century is the background of Mr. Neil Bell's new novel, THE DESPERATE PURSUIT (Collins. 8s. 6d.). The story is told by Hew Critten, a young shipbuilder of Southwold, Suffolk. With John Youngs, a Puritan minister, in charge, a shipload of determined men and women set sail from Southwold in "the desperate pursuit of religious and political freedom." They followed the trail of the *Mayflower* and came to safe harbour in Salem, then as now in New England. But before the voyage of the *Mary Ann* (and a tough and adventurous voyage it was) there had been other adventures and plenty of action in the lives of John Youngs and Hew Critten. The story ends with the founding of a new community at what had been an Indian settlement on Long Island. They sailed from New Haven on the Connecticut shore, across the Sound, and drew near to what they saw was a wondrous likeness to the coast between Walber's Wick and Eastern Bavents. They cried out in astonishment, "Well, indeed, might I cry out, for it seemed to me that here I had walked a hundred times; here were not only Haven, beach, saltings, creek, cliffs, but the very trees, shrubs and flowers . . . this *is* Southwold." So John Youngs named it Southwold, and of its first church, founded in October 1640, he became pastor.

Though this is an historical novel, it is rich in human stuff, full of good adventure and with the authentic stamp of its period.

Mr. Neil Gunn returns once more to the sea in his new novel, THE SILVER DARLINGS (Faber and Faber. 10s. 6d.). It is the story of men who, driven from their Highland homes by rapacious landlords, came down to the edge of the northern seas and endured the most terrible privations until they learned to become fishermen. First of all they tried to scratch a bare living from the rocky wastes of those shores, for they were agriculturists from the Highland valleys, and that was all they knew.

Turning to the sea for a living, they improvised and learned painfully. Yet still they were oppressed. Press gangs descended upon their flimsy craft and hauled off the best and brightest of them, never to be seen again.

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This novel is firmer, more mature, richer in action, and remarkable for the dominant character of Catrine, who is, indeed, a heroine in a thousand.

THE HEART OF BRITAIN: In Bristol they have always danced the May Dance on May Day. Now that this fair and historic city bears the scars of Nazi vandalism, still among the wrecked houses the children dance and their elders still watch them. All the carefully selected and posed German propaganda pictures cannot equal the spontaneous examples of Britain's grit and determination to resist Nazi brutality such as that evidenced above

ETIQUETTE FOR EVACUEES: The tough boys of Dockland, evacuated from London's East Ham to a Surrey school camp, have now become perfect "gents." Ballroom dancing has now been introduced to these children, aged 9 to 15½, by their schoolmaster, Mr. William Skipsey. "If they don't like it," he said, "they don't have to come." Very few stayed away

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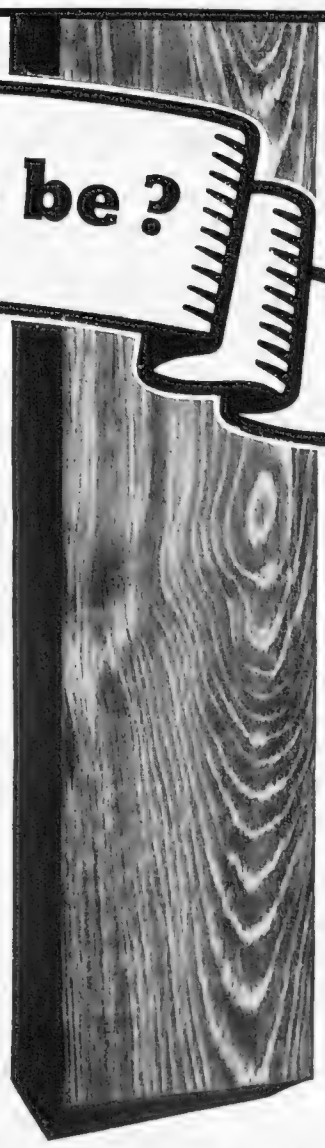

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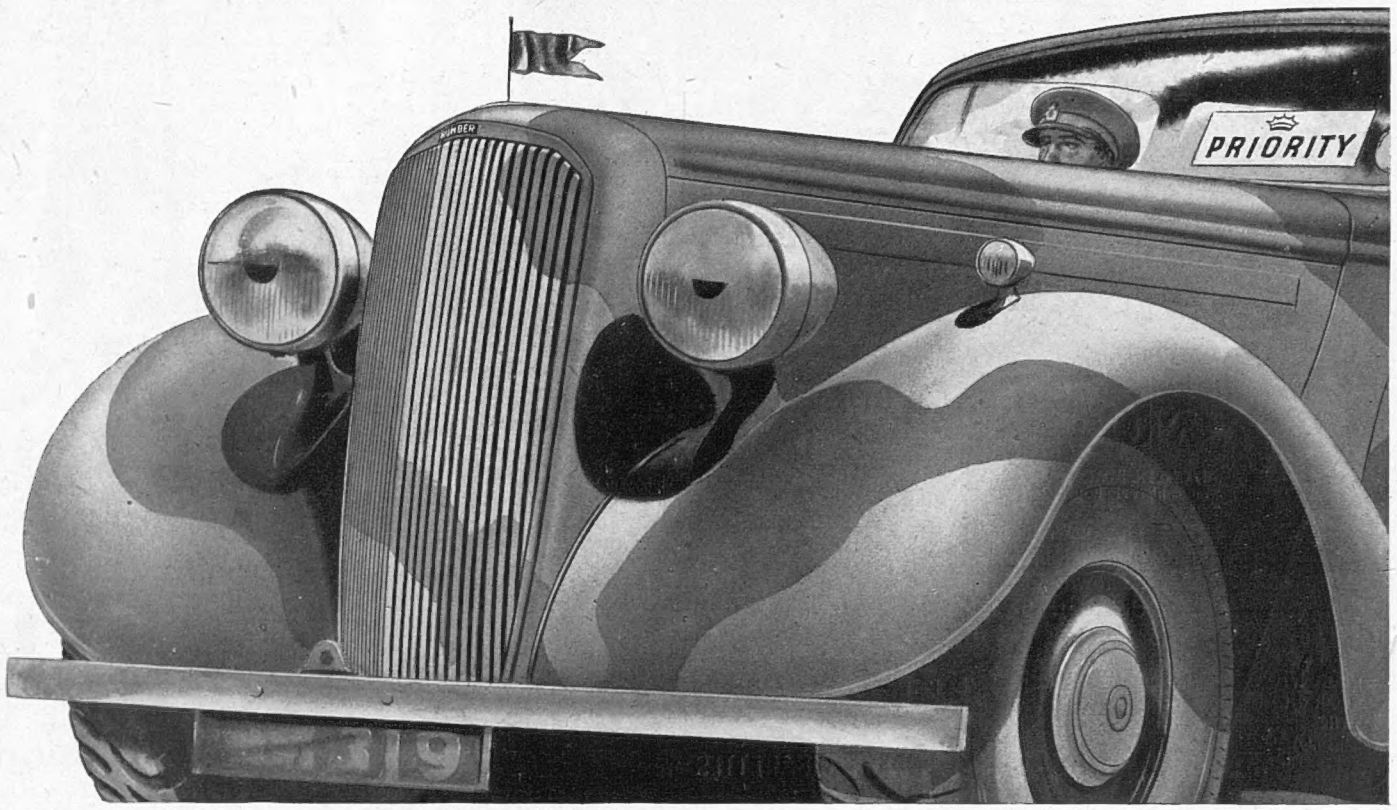

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

PRIOR to the commencement of this, the greatest of all wars, nine out of ten people who wrote seeking my advice made some stipulation as regards the weather. Some sought an hotel in a mild place, others in bracing surrounds. Some shunned wind, others damp. And all, when it came to holidays, asked for the certainty of sunshine.

Now, although freedom from blitz has taken precedence over blizzards, and we accept much inferior weather with the comforting thought that Luftwaffe may be grounded because of water-logged conditions, bad weather, for all that, will have a physiological effect on our post-war minds when our holiday horizon is once more enlarged.

It is unfortunate that Torquay, Bournemouth, Bath, Cheltenham and other of our winter resorts have not fulfilled this last winter the promise of the posters. In place of blue skies and people promenading in the sunshine, there has been rain, tempest, and even snow. In short, Old Man Weather has proved to be their enemy and not their ally.

The danger is, that we may avoid and not resort to such places after the war, unless we face the issue now, and realise this would be manifestly unfair. Bad weather comes in cycles. A doctor in Torquay, who has been resident there for eight years, told how for the first five he had forgotten the real meaning of winter, then came three bad years. Ten years ago, there were only four week-ends in the year that were not spoiled by bad weather, and such is the fickleness of the British climate that whilst to-day it may be like summer, to-morrow you may be back in mid-winter.

So don't blame those resorts you are now residing in, or even the poor hotelier, for letting you down in this matter of weather. Take consolation from the fact that when it seems cold in, say, Torquay, it 's many degrees colder on Tyneside; and be thankful for the comparative safety in which you live.

Nature always compensates us eventually for her outpourings. Spring, though leisurely this year, has brought much promise, and I cannot recall any year when the daffodils have been so noble, and so prolific. There is a wealth of bud on the trees. The wall-flowers are now taking up their position in the first line of colour, and if I was seeking an hotel just now for Leave or a break from blitz, I should be more concerned with an hotel that could promise me a colourful flower-bed than one which stressed its interior spring mattresses.

I often feel that hotels do not make sufficient capital out of their gardens. They laud their chefs, and we tip in profusion their hall porters and their varied staff. But what little credit is given, either by proprietors or visitors, to the hotel gardener; to the man who provides feasts for our eyes, offers solace to our nerves and, importantly . . . provides fresh produce for the kitchens. All hail then to the hotel gardener and his acreage, be it large or small.

One can recall many instances of where hotels do feature their gardens and get the best out of them with most satisfying results. Lincombe Hall Hotel describes itself as the garden hotel of Torquay, and its self-appointed title is well deserved. The gardens of the Crest at Crowborough, and particularly the contents of their glass-houses, provide guards of honour for the hotel visitor as he enters and act as aids to peacefulness in the lounges, dining rooms and bedrooms. Then there is the Rose Garden at the Montagu Arms at Beaulieu; the trout stream running through the gardens of the Swan at Bibury . . . . and so one could go on.

But if I were an hotel proprietor I should go a step further. I would encourage every visitor in these war days to do some gardening themselves. The dear old ladies would be given a patch where they could cultivate their favourite flowers, and the old gentlemen, who can no longer bend, would be deputed to trim a hedge, or given some rose trees to prune, whilst as to the younger ones, they could till, mow, weed, prune or help dig for victory.

Practically all hotel gardens, particularly those in the country, could do with some willing hands, especially in these present days when labour is getting so scarce.

As well as all hands to the stirrup pumps after black-out, let the battle cry go out, "Volunteers for the garden." It would prove an aid to victory by way of the kitchen front. It would be the means of providing more flowers, an expensive item these days for the hotel rooms downstairs and up; and, above all, it would destroy those seeds of discontent which always germinate in an atmosphere where people have nothing to do but to sleep, eat, and then sleep and eat again.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a 2½d. stamp for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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